MARVEL COMICS

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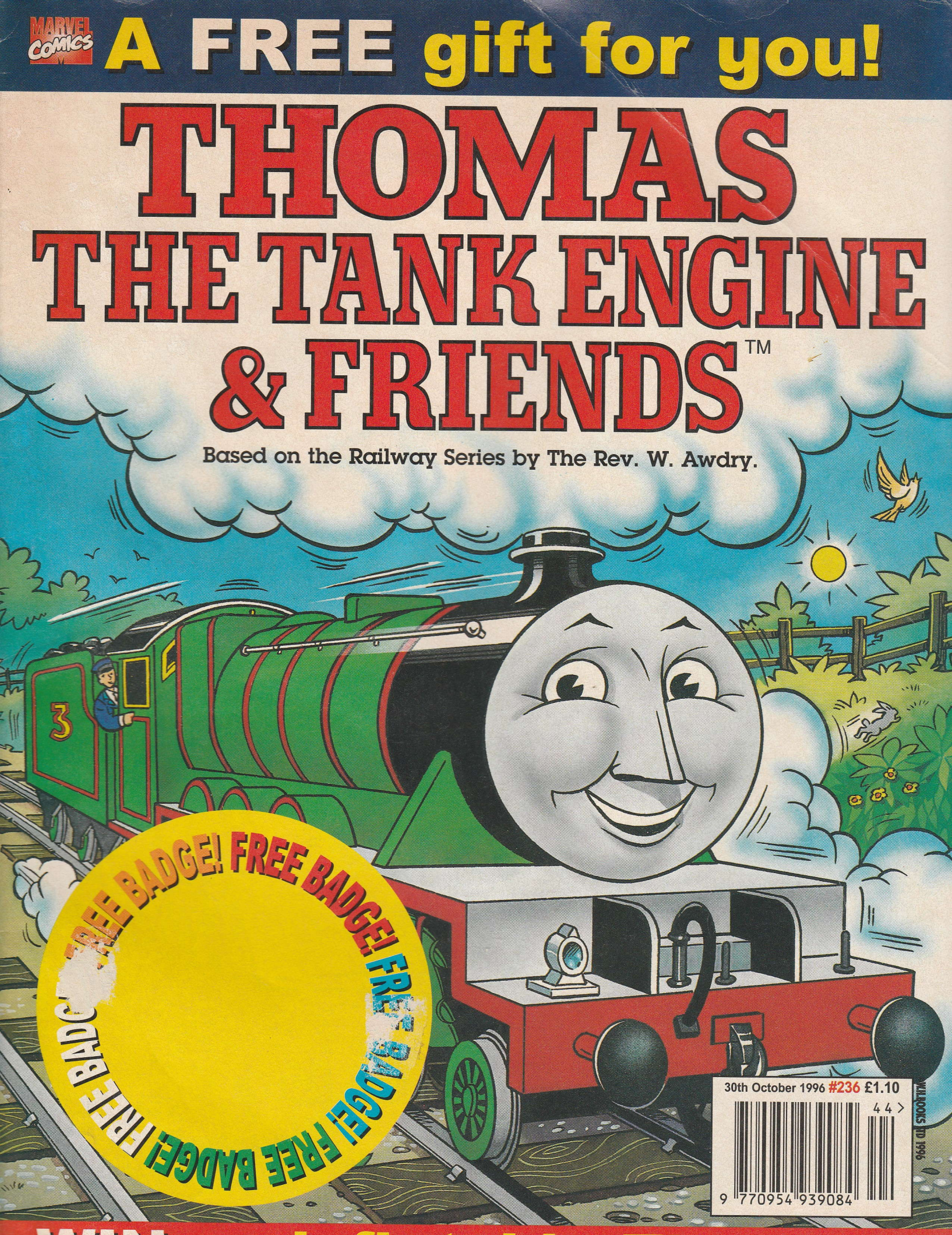
THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS™

Based on the Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry.



30th October 1996 #236 £1.10
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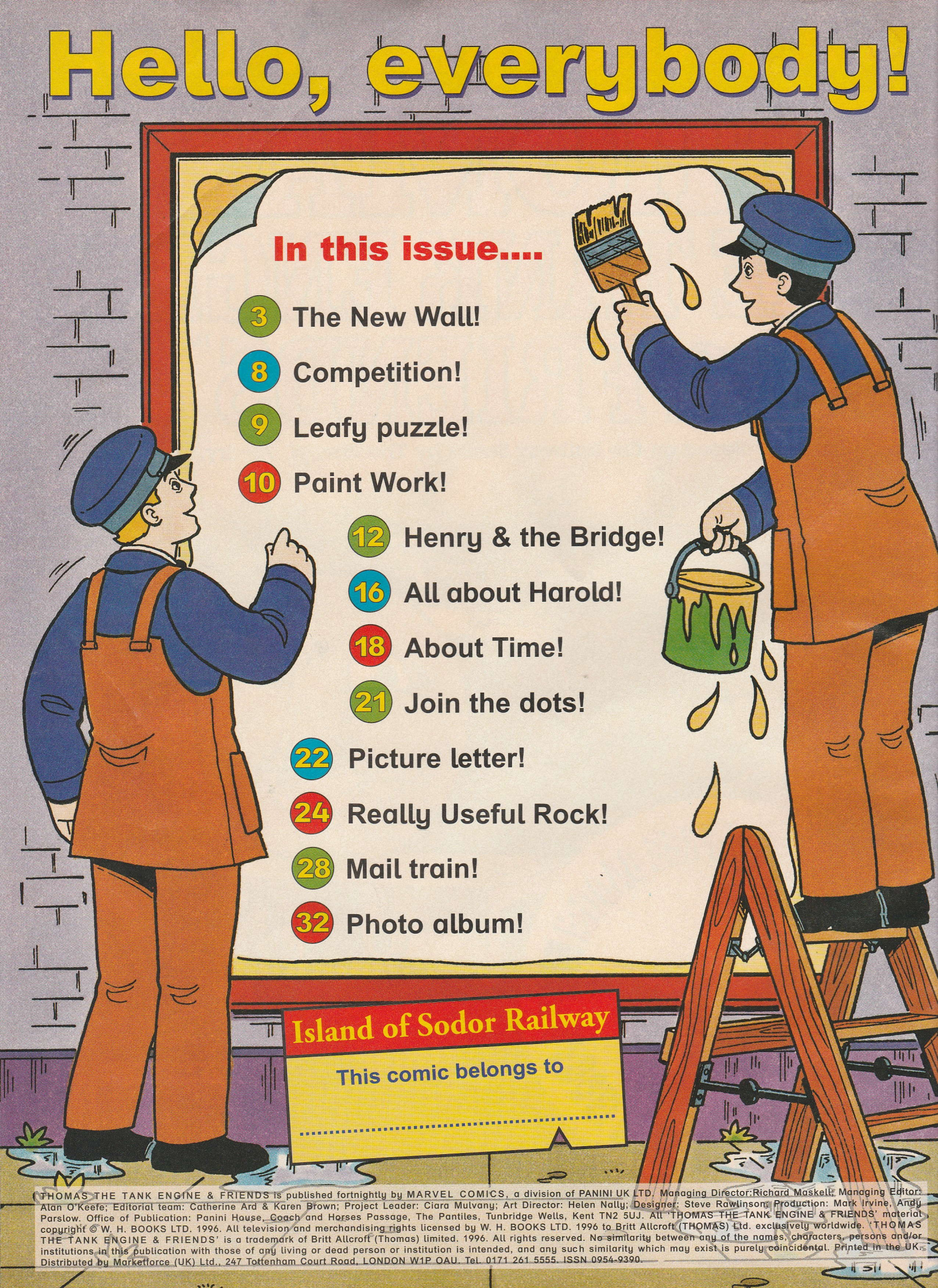
WILLSOKS LTD 1996

WIN an inflatable Thomas!

Hello, everybody!



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Island of Sodor Railway

This comic belongs to

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THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS is published fortnightly by MARVEL COMICS, a division of PANINI UK LTD. Managing Director:Richard Maskell; Managing Editor: Alan O'Keefe; Editorial team: Catherine Ard & Karen Brown; Project Leader: Ciara Mulvany; Art Director: Helen Nally; Designer: Steve Rawlinson; Production: Mark Irvine, Andy Parslow. Office of Publication: Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5UJ.

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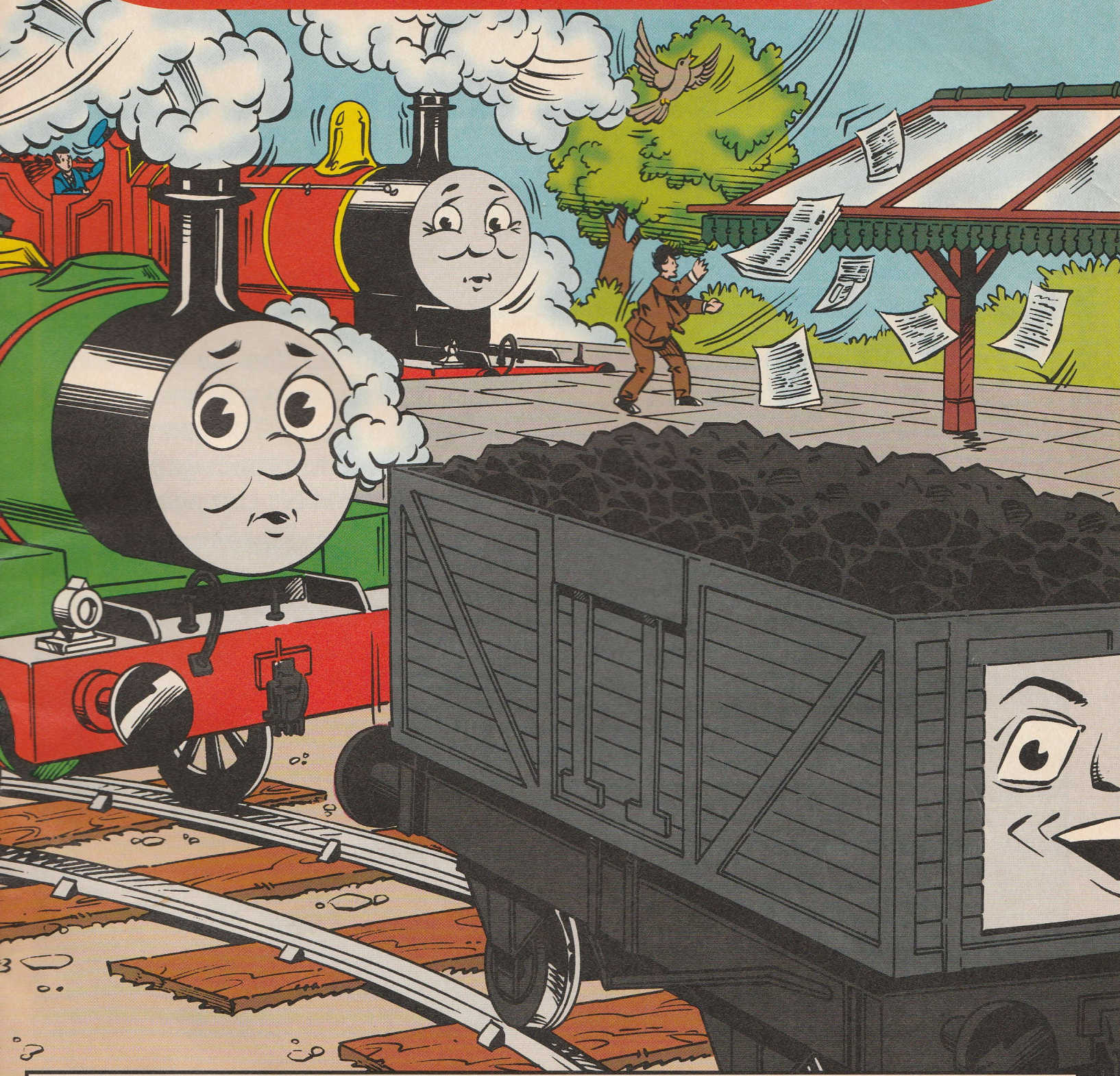
The New Wall!

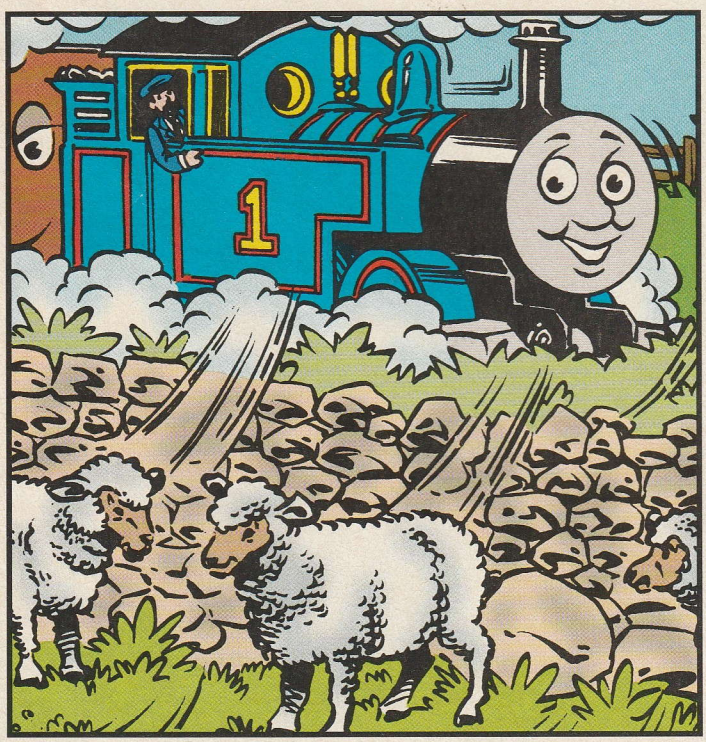


1. Gales had howled across the Island of Sodor for days. It made work difficult for the engines. The wind tugged at their wheels. Gusts rocked their carriages and trucks.

2. Thick smoke from the steam engines' funnels blew into their eyes so they went very slowly. The diesel engines also had to pull extra hard against the strong wind.

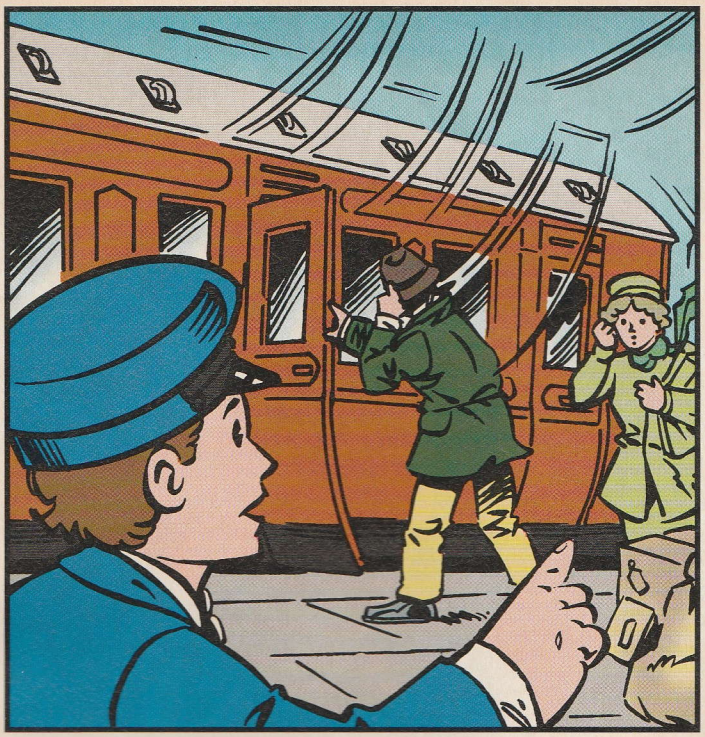
3. As Thomas left the Main Station with Annie and Clarabel, he met Mavis returning from the quarry. Her trucks were full of big stones. "They look heavy!" he said.

4. "At least they stop the wind from making all my trucks bounce about," she replied. Soon, Thomas was puffing along his branch line. "Go carefully," cried his carriages.

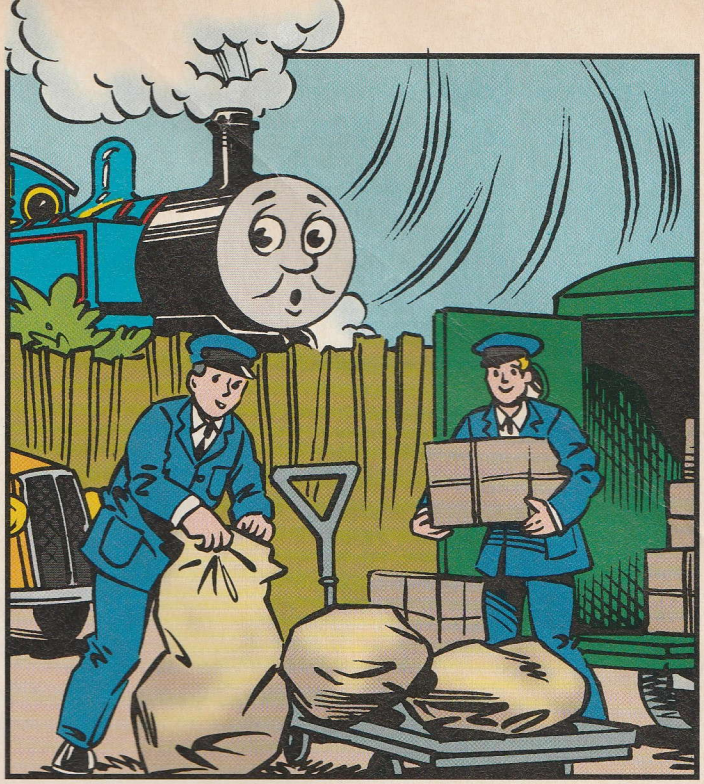


5. Annie and Clarabel were nervous because the wind made them shudder. As Thomas passed a hill farm, he spotted some sheep standing close to a long wall.

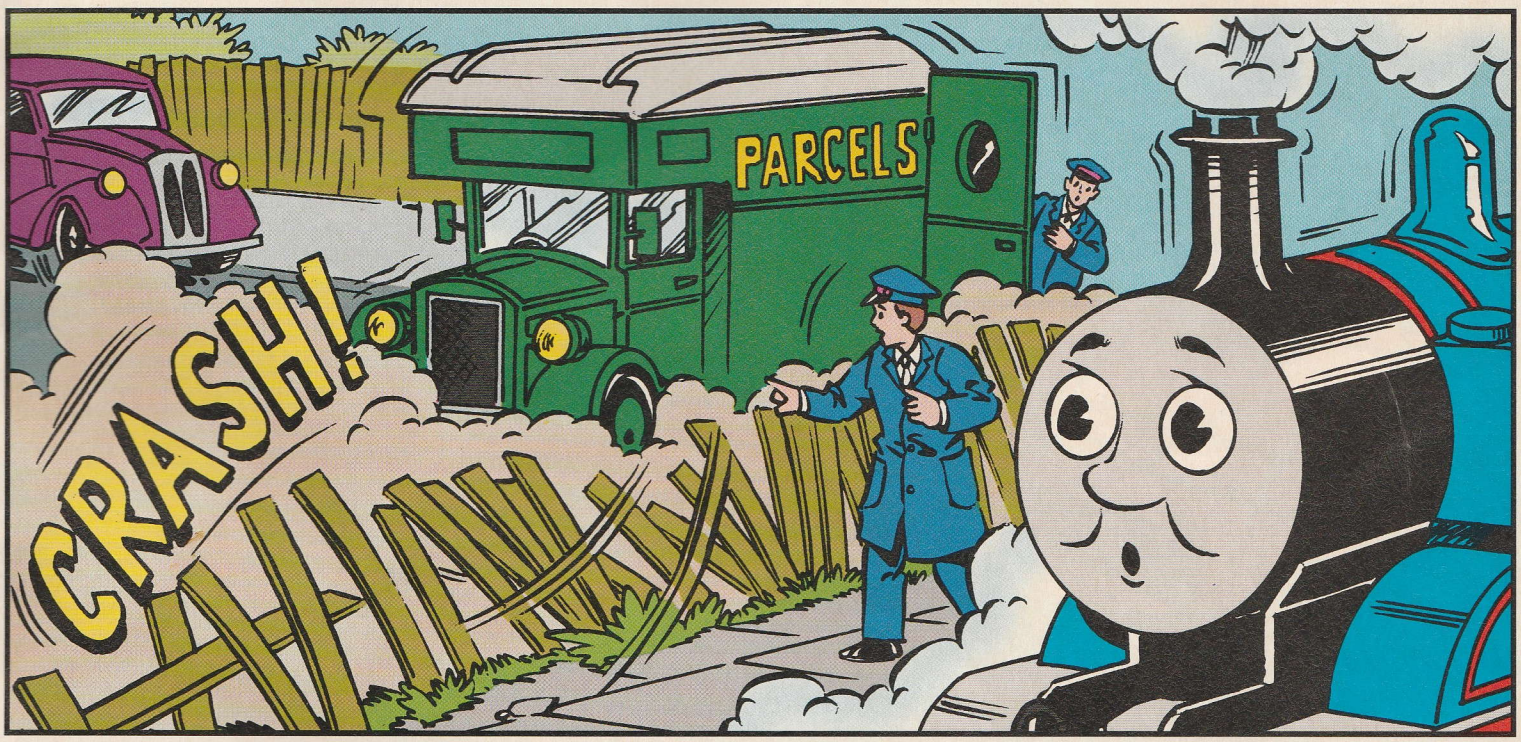
6. "That's called a dry-stone wall," said Thomas' driver. "The sheep are using it to shelter from the wind." "I wish I could," thought Thomas. At last, he pulled up at a station.



7. "Mind the doors," called the stationmaster as passengers climbed aboard. The people were pleased to get inside. Thomas also had to collect post and parcels.



8. They were unloaded from a lorry in the station car park. The wind rattled the wooden fence. Suddenly, an extra strong gust blew it down. "Look out!" yelled Thomas.



9. The fence crashed noisily to the ground. It just missed the lorry and cars and bicycles that belonged to Thomas' passengers. "It's lucky no one was hurt," gasped Thomas.

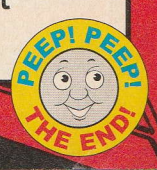
10. "If we rebuild the fence, it might blow down again," explained the worried stationmaster. "A stone wall wouldn't," replied Thomas. "What a good idea!" said his driver.

11. Back at the Main Station, they spoke to the Fat Controller. He arranged for Mavis to carry stone to the station. Then Thomas arrived. He was pulling a works train.

12. He carried workmen and an expert who knew how to build a dry-stone wall. First, they cleared away the broken fence. Then the men unloaded the stone.

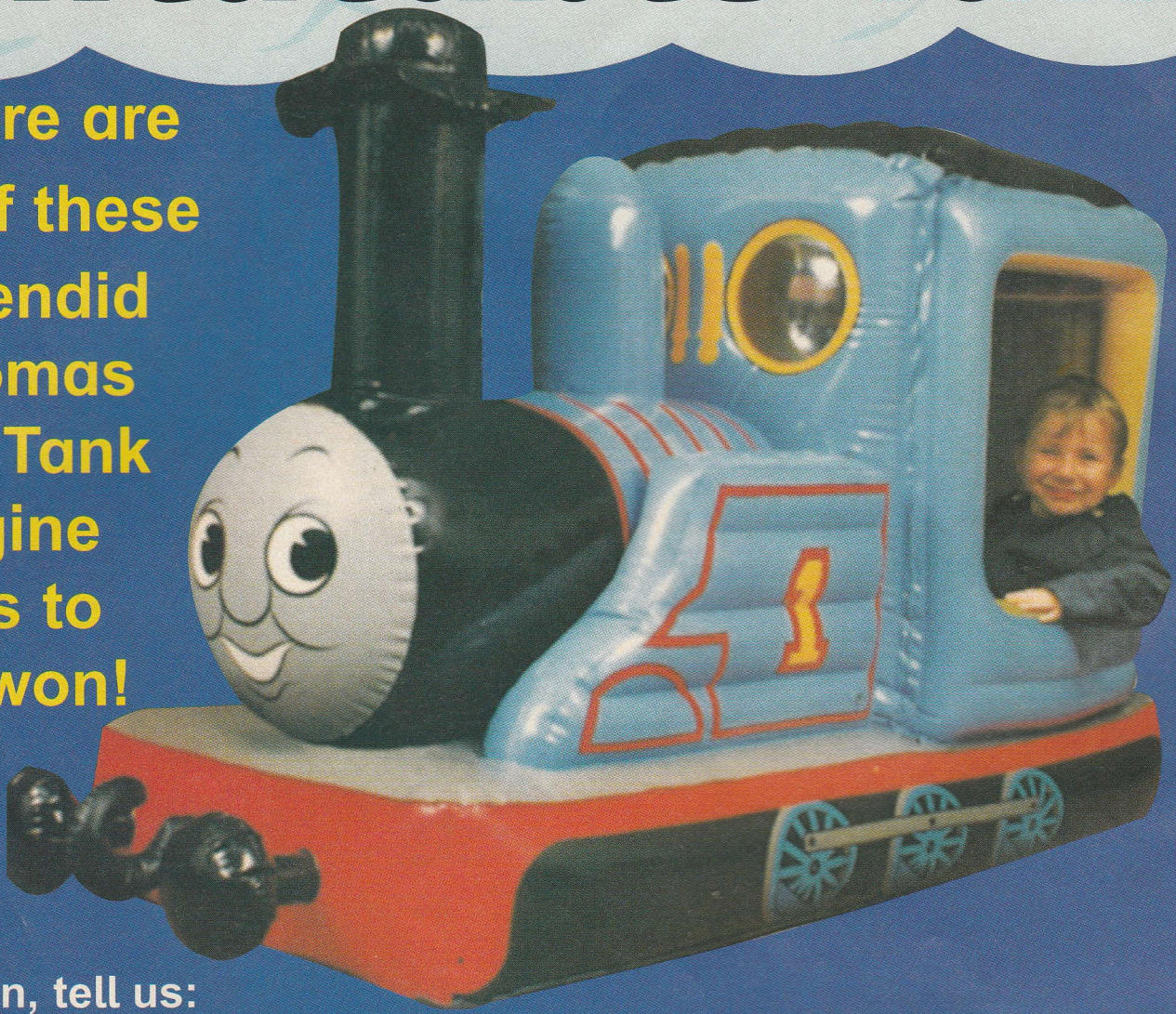
13. Thomas took the workmen to and fro for several days. At last, the job was finished. A new dry-stone wall surrounded the station car park. "It looks grand!" said Thomas.

14. "Thanks to you," replied the stationmaster. "That won't blow down in a hurry." "Cars and lorries can shelter behind a stone wall, just like sheep!" smiled Thomas.



Inflatable fun!

There are **4** of these splendid Thomas the Tank Engine toys to be won!



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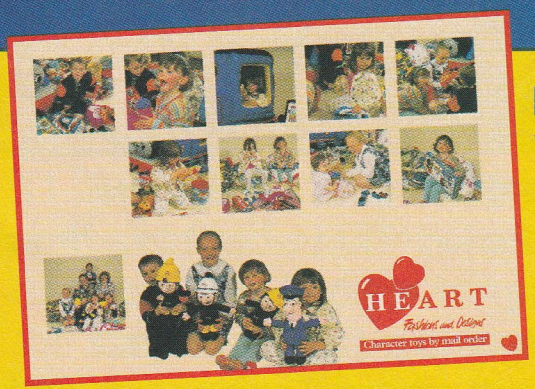
To win, tell us:

Where do Donald and Douglas come from?

Send your answer, along with your name and address, to: Thomas Inflatable competition, Heart Fashions and Designs, 37a High Street, Walsall Wood, W Midlands, WS9 9LR. All entries must arrive by the 7th November!



Heart Fashions and Designs stock over 150 Thomas products in their mail order catalogue. For your FREE copy, telephone 01543 377182, quoting reference 236, or write to them at the competition address above.

Rules: This competition is open to all readers and their families except employees of participating companies and their families. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence wil be entered into.

Leafy Puzzle!

Can you see what is hidden behind the leaves!

ANSWERS: HAT UMBRELLA FLAG WHISTLE SUITCASE LAMP

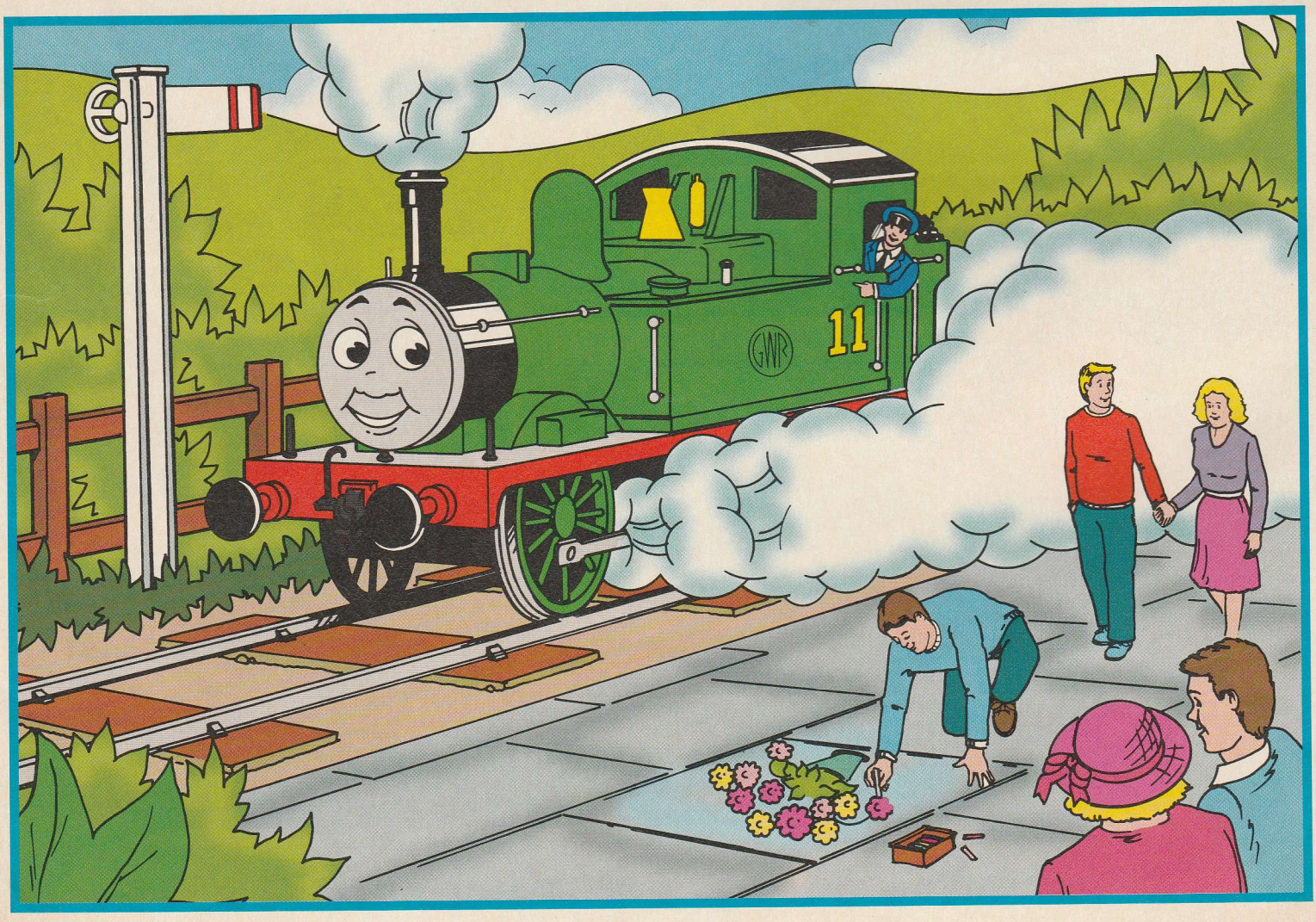
Paintwork!

One grey morning, Oliver pulled a goods train along his branch line. "What a gloomy day," thought the little tank engine.

As he neared Wellsworth Station, Oliver stopped at a signal. Beside the line, a crowd of people watched a man drawing a large picture, with coloured chalks, on the pavement. "He's a pavement artist," the driver explained to Oliver. The picture was of a vase filled with beautiful flowers. "How clever," said Oliver who could see it, too.

The picture was so colourful, it made him feel much happier.

Suddenly, it began to rain. At first, a few drops splashed onto Oliver's shiny, green paintwork. SPLIP! SPLOP! But in no time, it was pouring.



Everyone rushed for cover. The cloudburst quickly washed away the pavement picture. "What a shame," said Oliver.

The signal changed and he puffed on his way. It had stopped raining when Thomas returned to the Main Station yard. But the sky was full of dark clouds.

The Fat Controller spoke to his engines and staff. "Winter is coming," he said. "I want ideas to brighten up the stations for passengers."

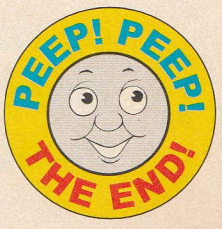
Oliver was thinking hard about it when he set off with a passenger train. It had started to rain again. Who should be waiting for Oliver's train at Wellsworth Station, but the pavement artist. "Your picture was very good," called Oliver's driver. "I can't do any more until next summer when the weather is better," said the artist. "Perhaps he can," thought Oliver. He spoke to his driver about his idea. "Do you draw engines?" the driver asked the artist, afterwards. "Yes, of course" he replied. "I must tell the Fat Controller at once," said Oliver's driver.

He wrote down the artist's home telephone number before Oliver steamed away.

The Fat Controller was very pleased to ring the artist and ask him to paint pictures of different kinds of engines. Then lots of posters were printed from them. They were stuck up in all the station waiting rooms. Everyone said how lovely and bright the big engine posters were.

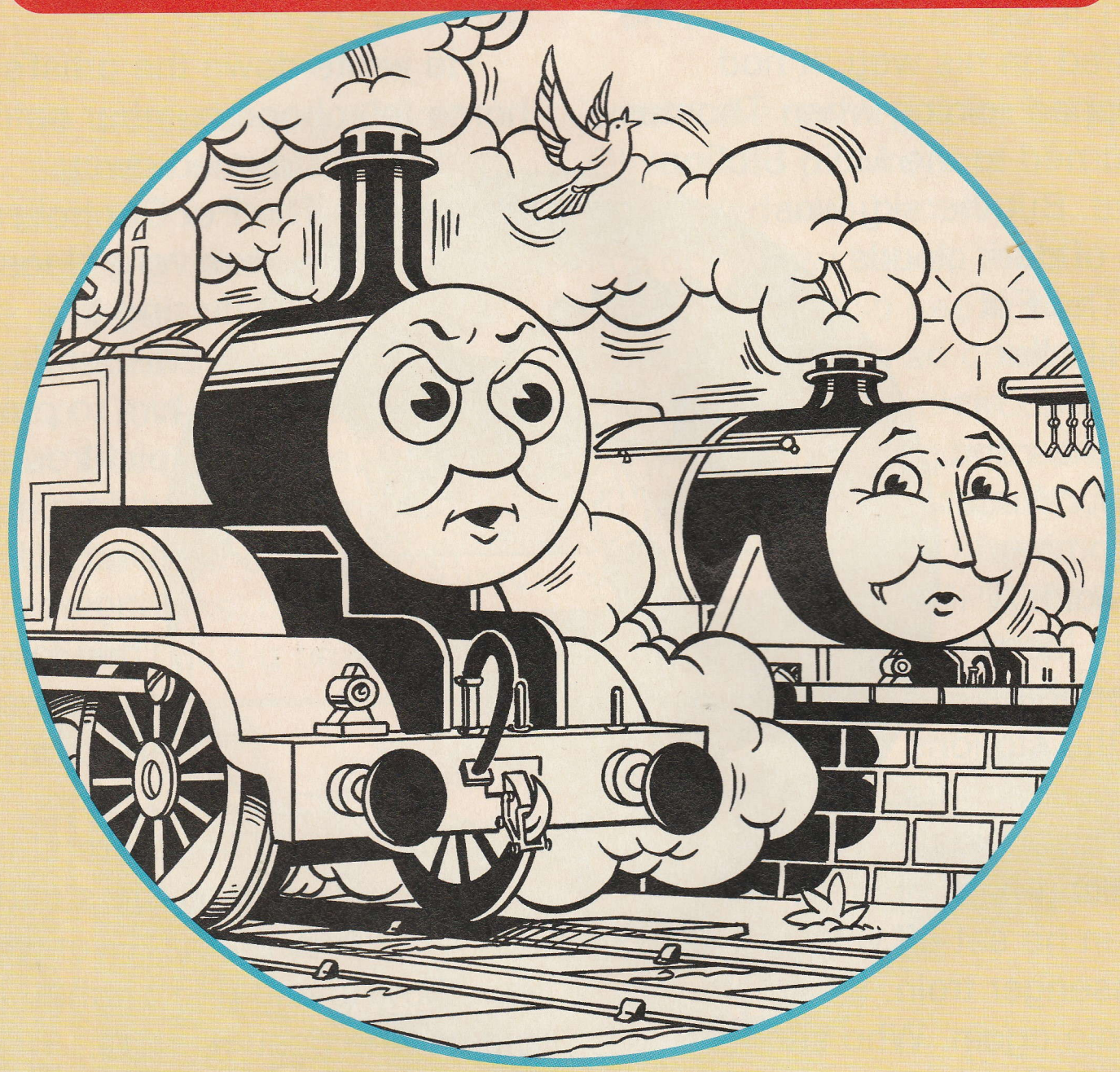
The engines puffed with pride. The passengers especially enjoyed seeing such sunny pictures on dull and rainy days, and the artist was happy to have been given so much work.

"His pictures won't get washed away now!" smiled Oliver.



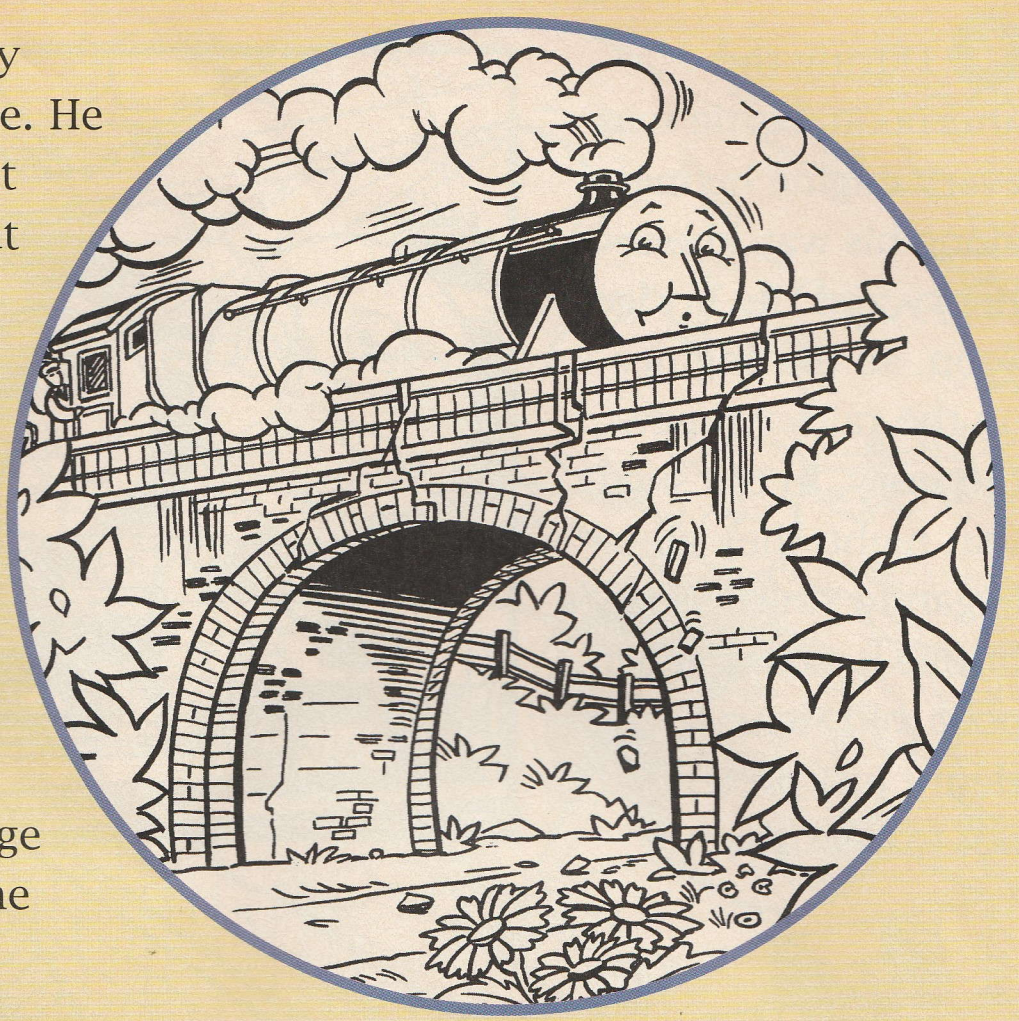
A read & colour story

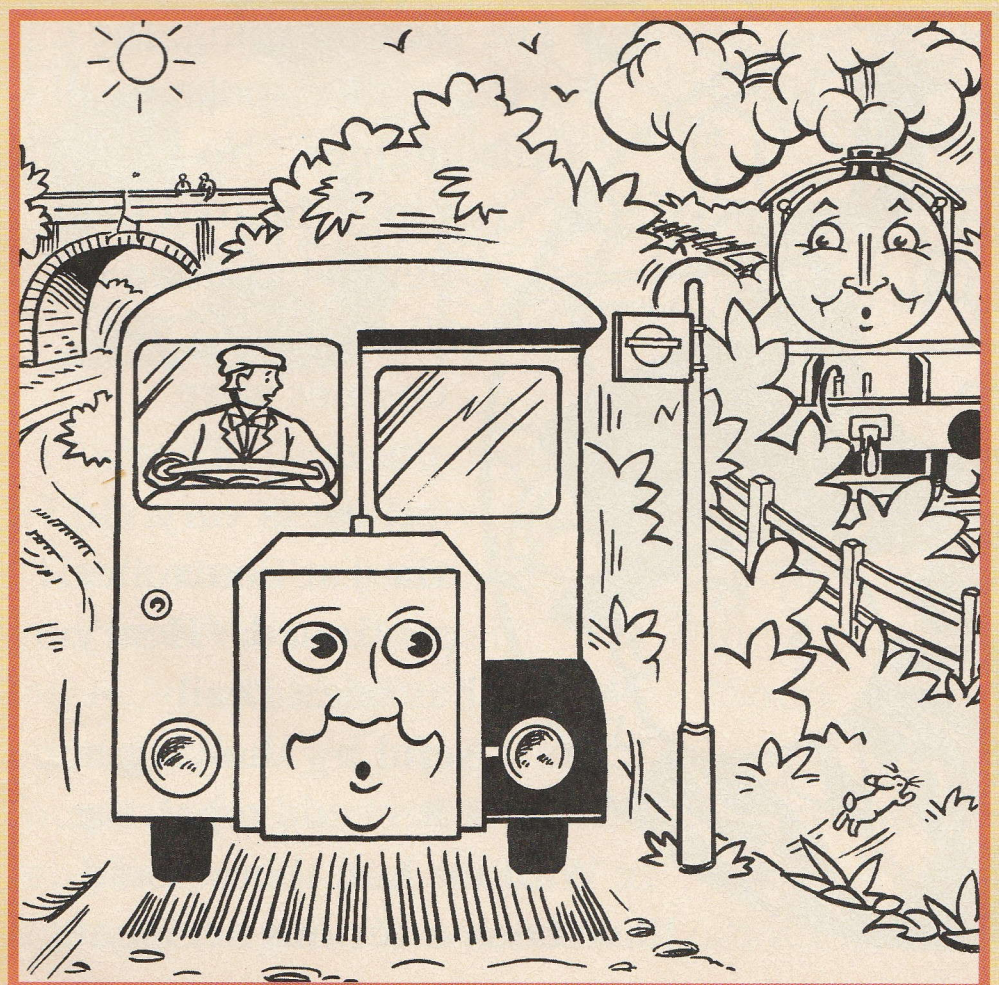
Henry And The Bridge!



1 Thomas was waiting at the station. Even the warm, sunny Autumn weather couldn't stop him from feeling grumpy. "Henry's connecting train is late!" he moaned. "I won't be on time now!" Five minutes later, looking hot and bothered, Henry rolled into the station. "I'm sorry I'm running late Thomas - I don't feel very well," he groaned. "Well," Thomas began, "it's probably because you're too heavy!" The little tank smiled cheekily and puffed on his way. He left poor Henry feeling worse than ever.

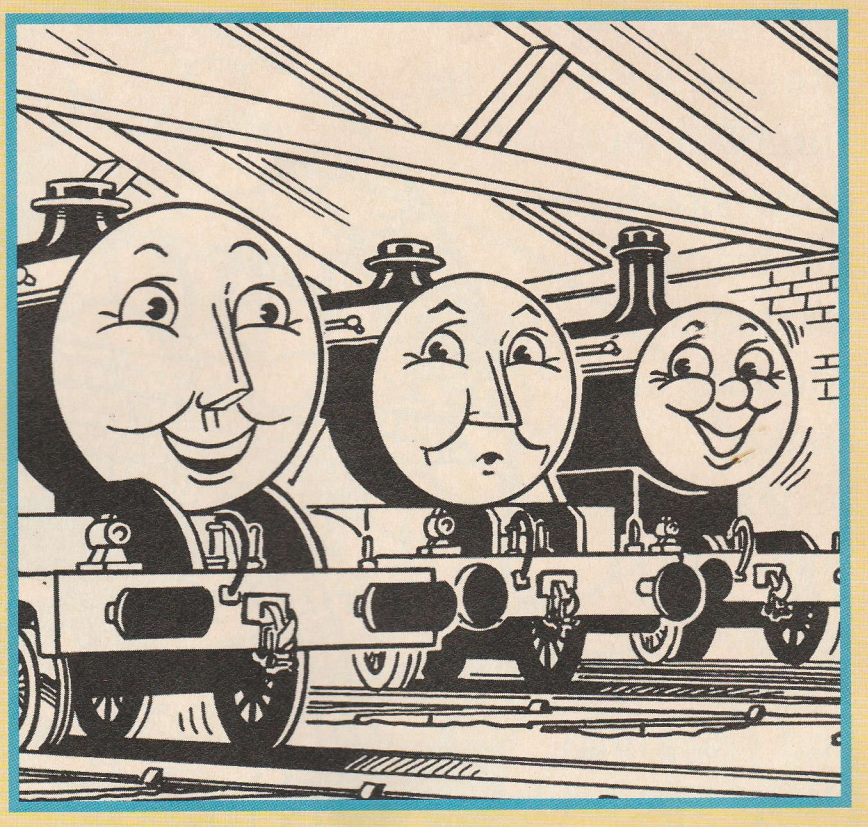
2 Later, Henry came to a bridge. He rumbled on to it quite slowly, but the bridge started to shudder and shake beneath him. Some bricks and cement were splitting and cracking. "Help! The bridge is crumbling!" he called out.





3 Henry's driver stopped the train. He and the guard walked back along the track to check the bridge. Henry remembered how Thomas had teased him. "Oh dear, I must be over weight!" he wailed to Bertie, who was parked nearby.

4 During the afternoon, Bertie told every engine he met along his way about Henry and the bridge. Soon, all the engines on the railway knew the story. In the shed that night, they all began to sing, "Henry's bridge is falling down - poor, old Henry!" Henry just pretended not to hear them.

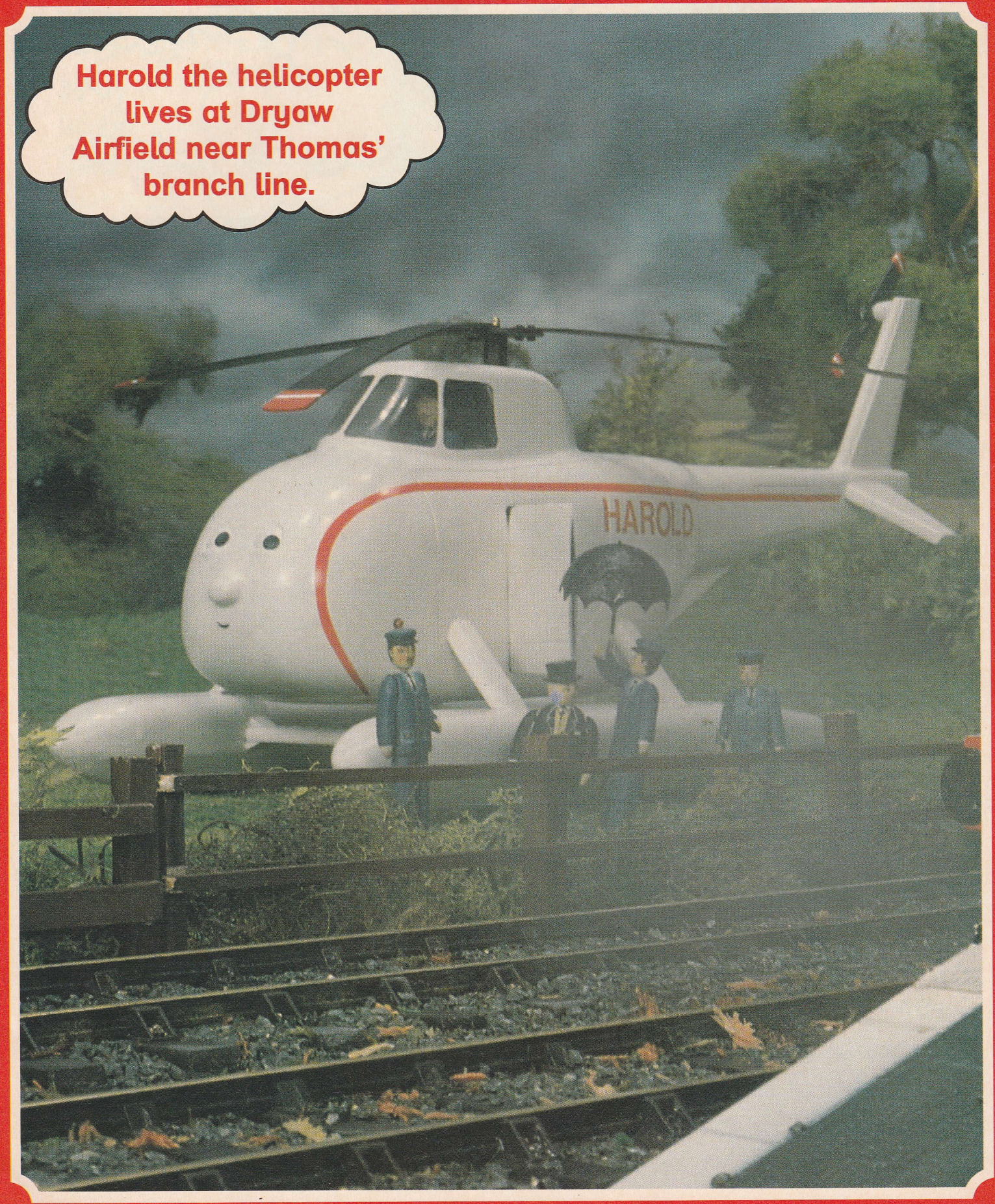


5 The next morning, the Fat Controller spoke to all the engines. "No more teasing," he told them. "Henry has done us all a favour." The engines were puzzled. "That bridge is very old," the Fat Controller continued. "Henry has been Really Useful by showing me that it needs repairing. Without him there could have been a serious accident."

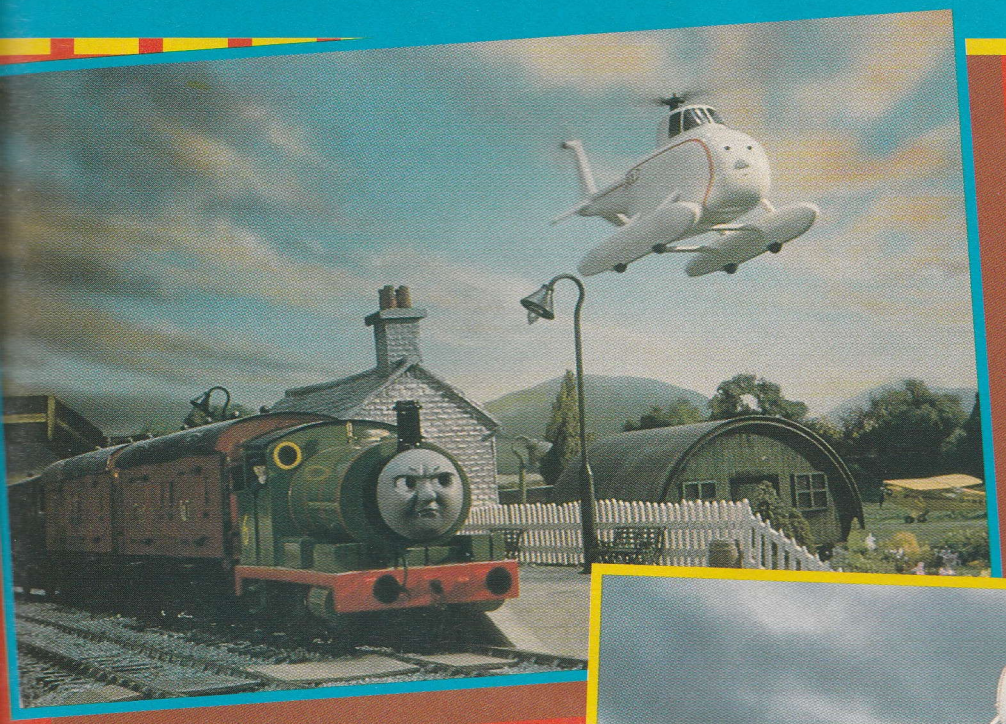
6 The Fat Controller ordered a check on Henry's system. "There must be a reason why you've been so sluggish lately," he told him. Sure enough, Henry's pipes were found to be blocked! It wasn't long before he was running at top speed again. When the old bridge was repaired a few weeks later, the Fat Controller decided that Henry should be the first engine to cross it. "Sorry about calling you too heavy!" Thomas called. Proud Henry puffed happily over the bridge without any worries about his weight!

The end

All about


Harold the helicopter lives at Dryaw Airfield near Thomas' branch line.
HAROLD

t Harold!



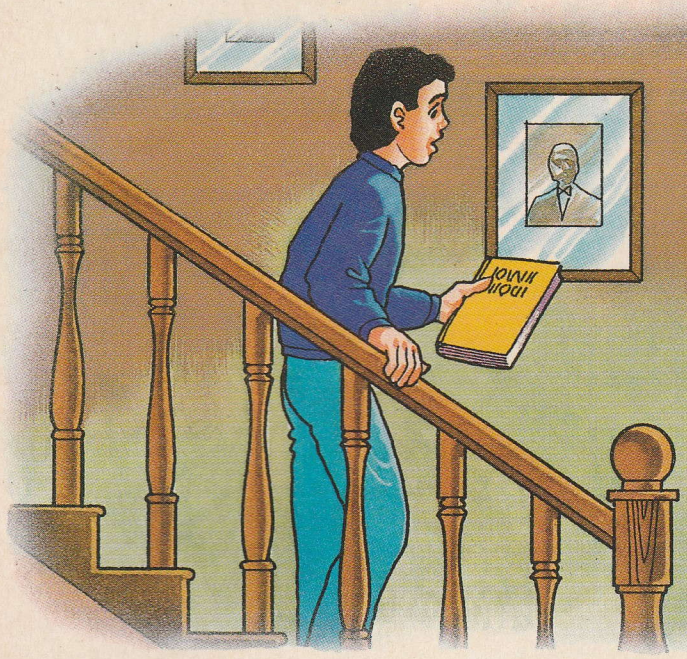
Percy was one of the first engines to meet him and they are now firm friends.

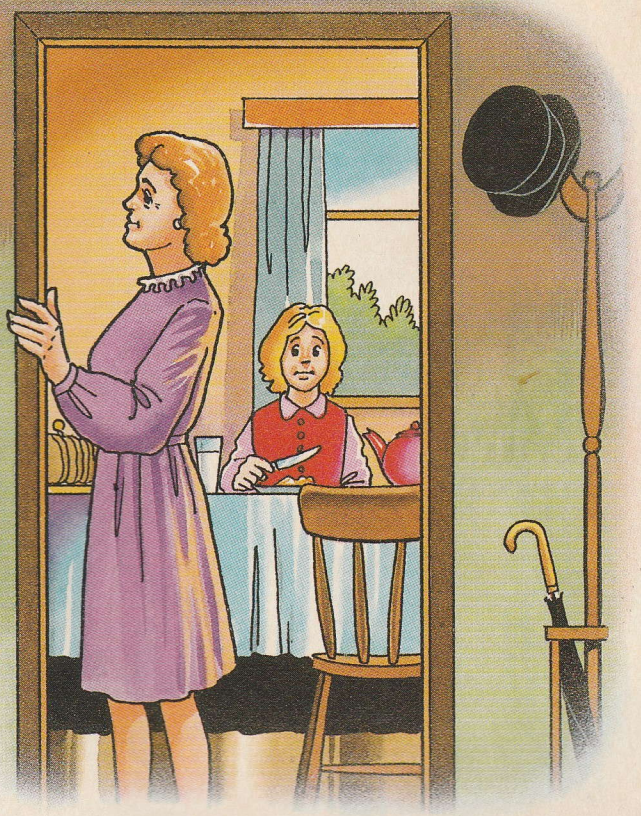
Harold is well loved by all the engines even though he can be noisy.

Win a model Harold!

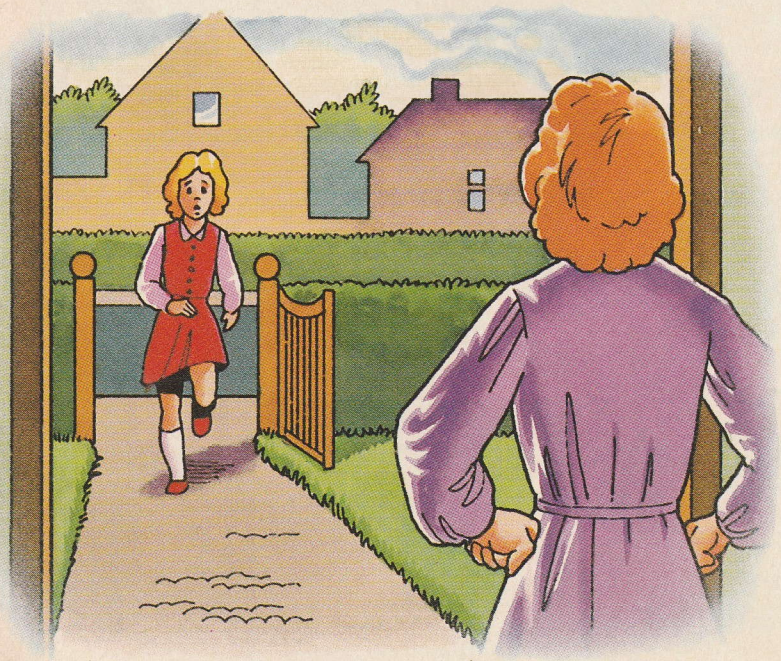
Five lucky winners will win a splendid model Harold from the ERTL engine range! Just send a post card, with your name, age and address to: Thomas/Harold model competition, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5UJ. Closing date: 6th November 1996. The first five names out of our postbag after the closing date will win their very own Harold!

About Time





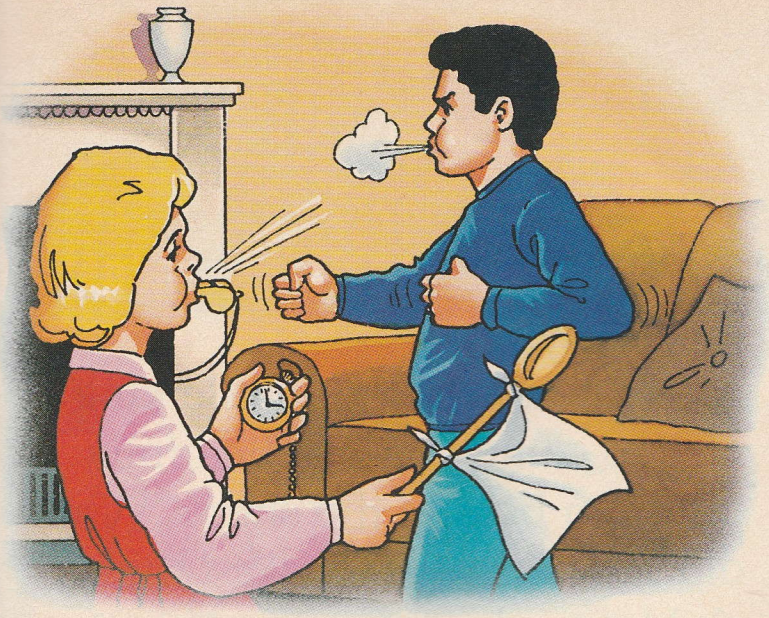
"You're late for breakfast, Stephen," Lady Hatt told her grandson as he came downstairs, one morning. "Sorry," he said. "I was reading an exciting book." "I hope your breakfast is still warm," replied Lady Hatt. "It serves me right if it isn't," added Stephen.



Afterwards, he carried on reading while Bridget visited a friend who lived nearby. "Lunch is at one o'clock," called Lady Hatt.

Now, Bridget was late. She returned just as the others had finished eating. "I was so busying enjoying myself, I forgot all about the time, grandma," said Bridget. "Just like me this morning," smiled Stephen.

The Fat Controller had come home for lunch too. He fetched an old pocket watch. "You two can borrow this," he told Stephen and Bridget. "Then you're sure to be on time."

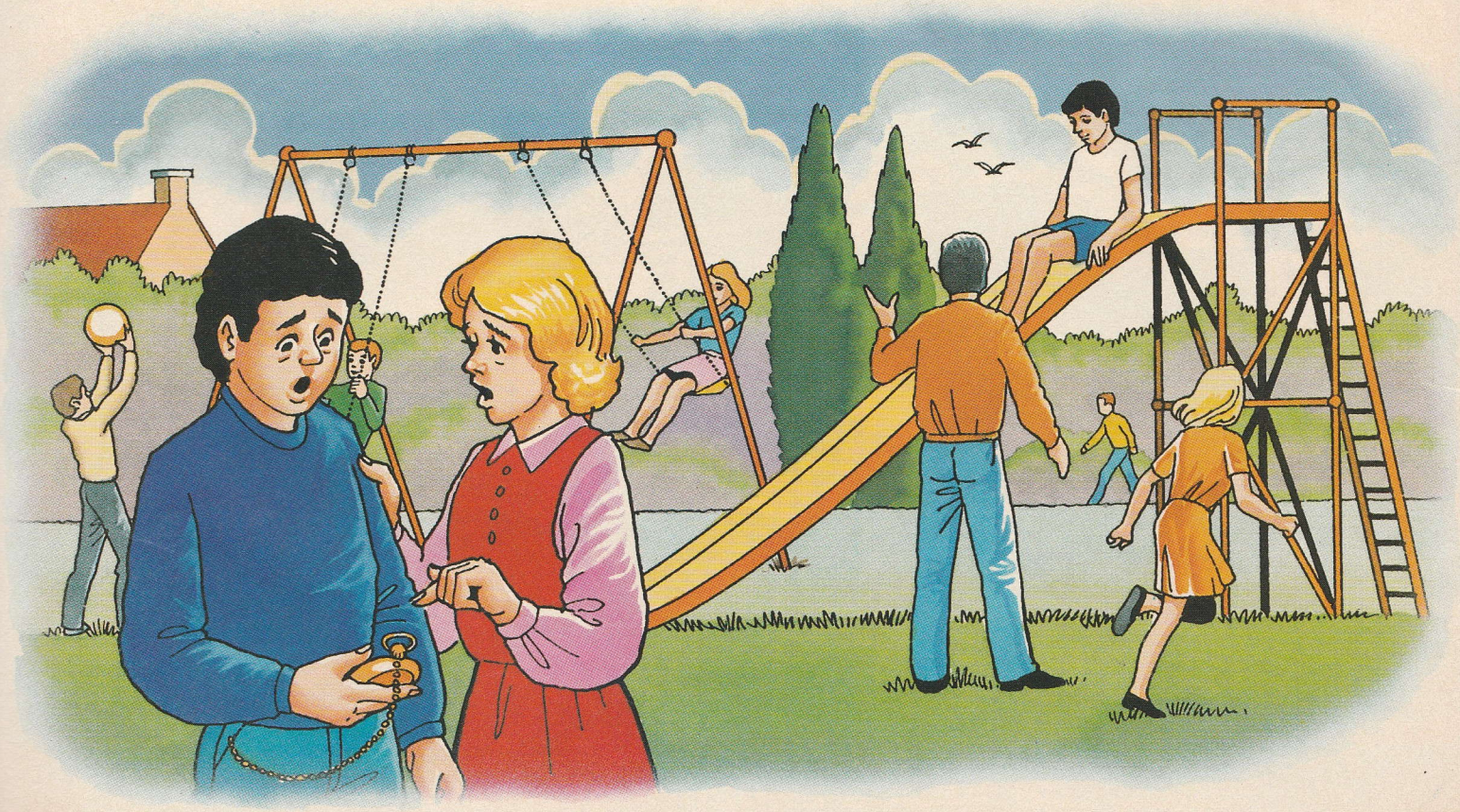


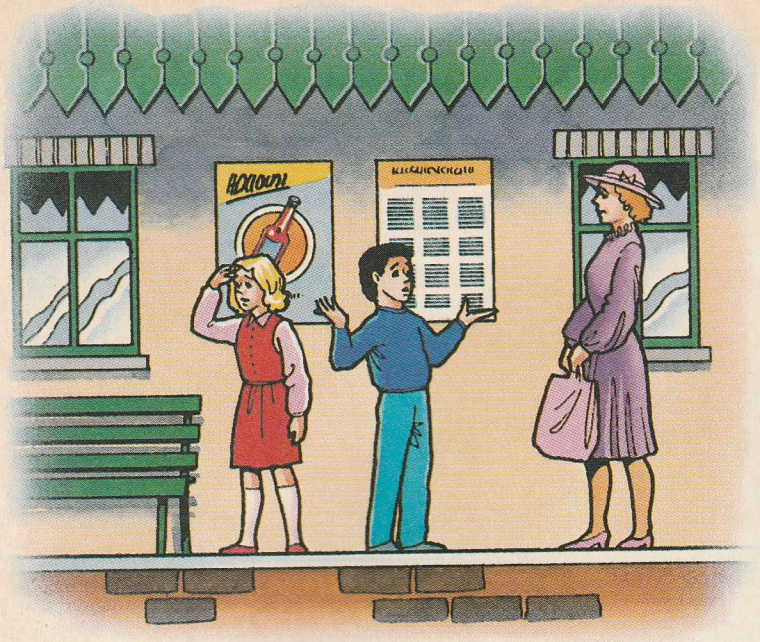
After lunch, the children used the watch to play railways. Bridget checked the time with it and blew a toy whistle. Her brother made a puffing noise and moved his arms backwards and forwards. "Pheep! I'm Thomas leaving the station," he called.

Before long, the vicar knocked at the front door. "I've been waiting at the park for Stephen and Bridget," he told Lady Hatt. "I promised to teach them to play tennis at three o'clock. That was half-an-hour ago." "Oh no, we're late again," groaned Stephen. "We've no excuse except that we were playing." "I'm afraid some other players are on the court now," replied the vicar.

He agreed to take Stephen and Bridget another day. They both went to the children's playground in the park instead. "Be home at five o'clock for tea," called Lady Hatt.

This time the children kept looking at the watch. Suddenly, they realised it had stopped. So



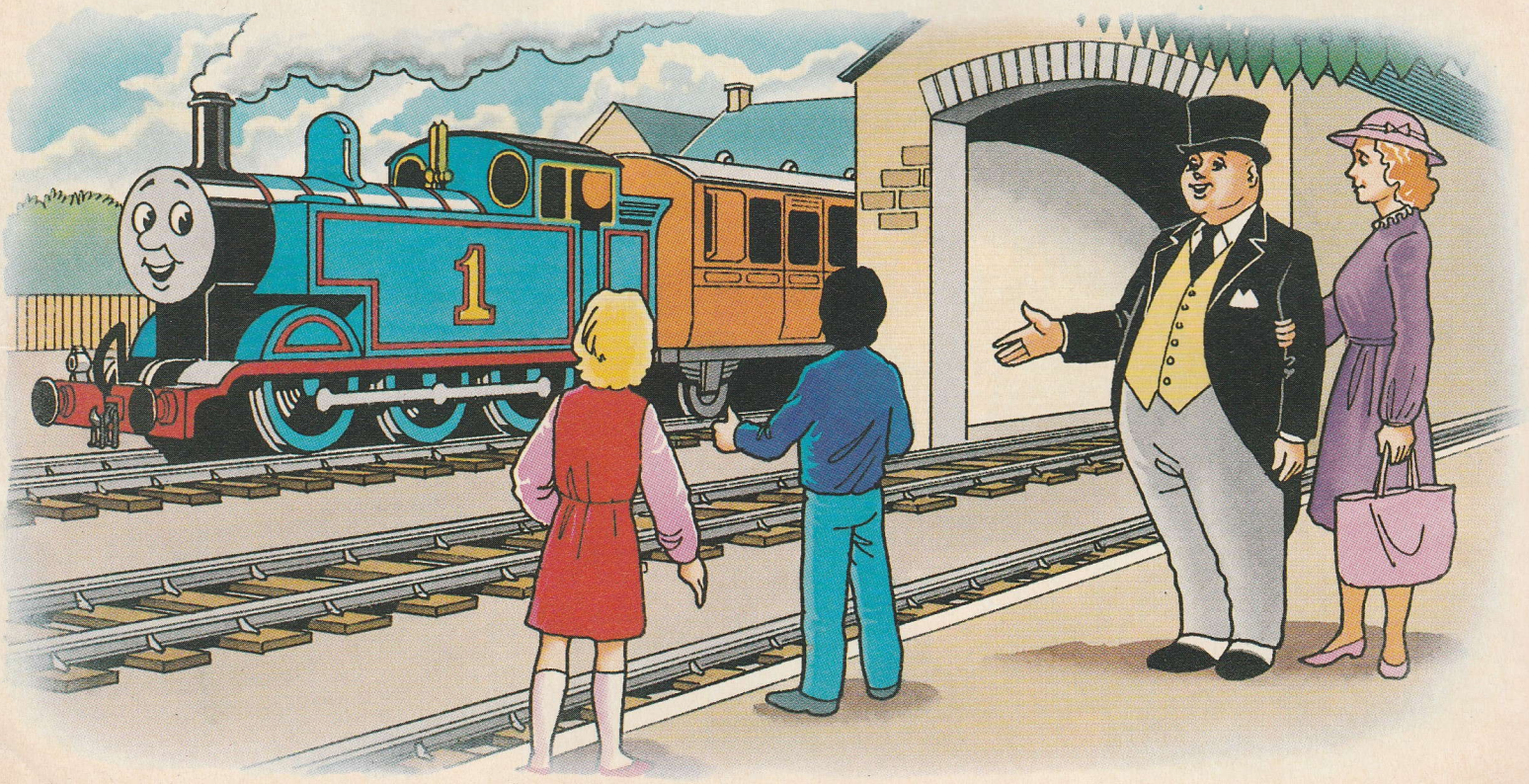


they were late as usual. "We forgot to wind up grandpa's watch," Bridget told Lady Hatt. "You must learn to be on time," she frowned. "It's not kind to keep people waiting."

Next day, Lady Hatt took her grandchildren to the cinema at Wellsworth. They were to travel there on Thomas' passenger train. When they arrived at the Main Station, Thomas was nowhere to be seen. "If he's late, we'll miss the film," cried Stephen. "Where can Thomas have got to?" asked Bridget, anxiously.

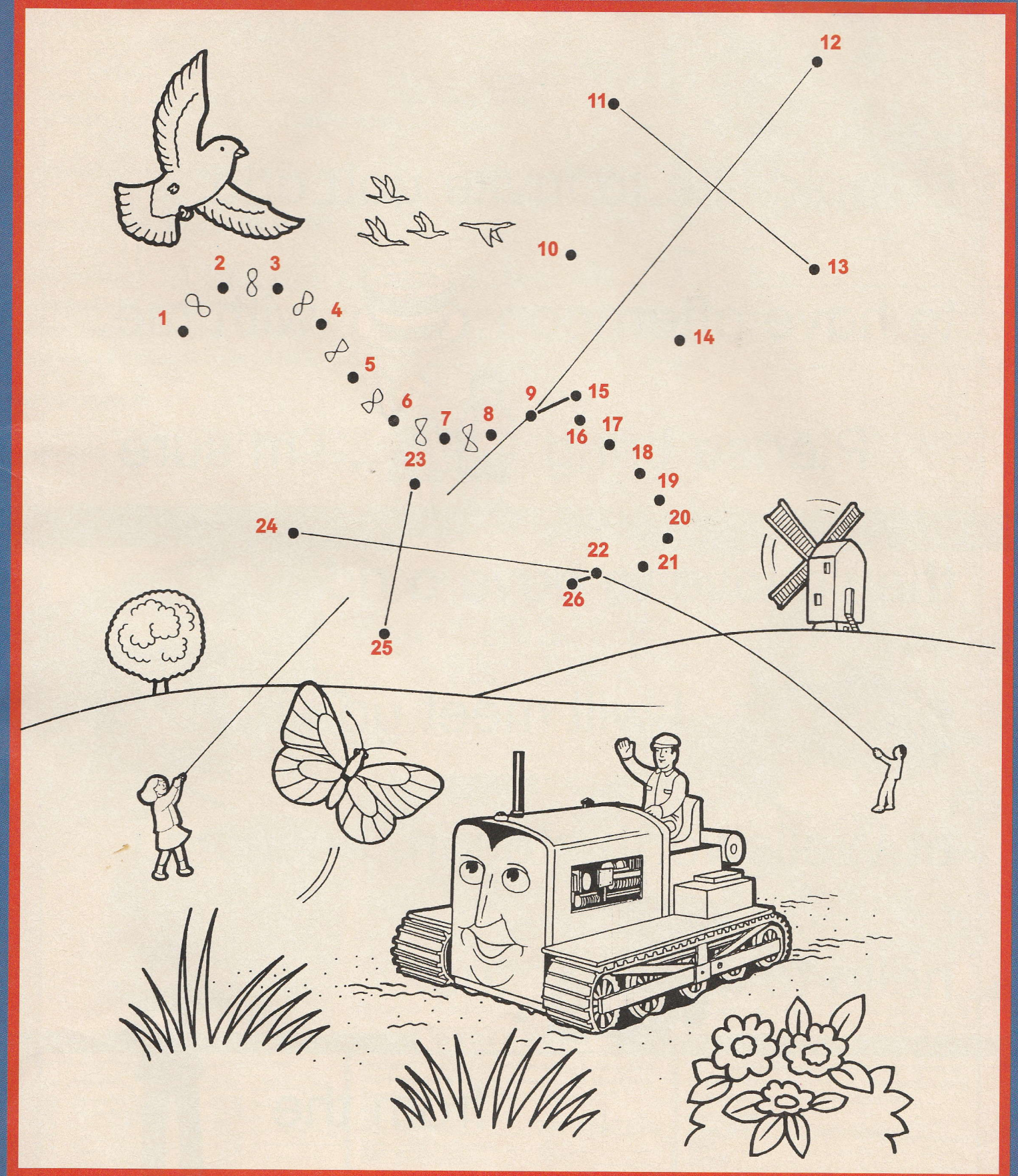
Next moment, the little tank engine came puffing cheerfully out from behind the shed. "Why did Thomas hide?" asked the children, who were puzzled. "I asked him to," said the Fat Controller, who arrived too. "It was Lady Hatt's idea." "I wanted you both to know what it feels like to be kept waiting," she smiled. "It's not very nice, grandma," the children agreed. "We promise to be on time from now," added Stephen. "Just like grandpa's engines."

THE END



Dot to dot!

Stephen and Bridget look up at the sky, can you see what's flying high?



When you have finished colour this page!

PICTURE POST!

The vicarage
Wellsworth
Sodor

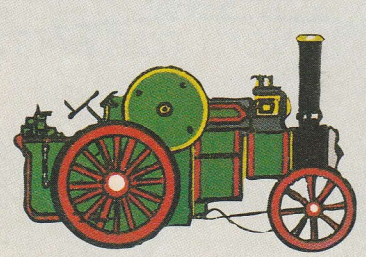
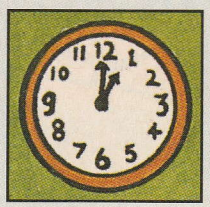
Dear

I would like to invite you and

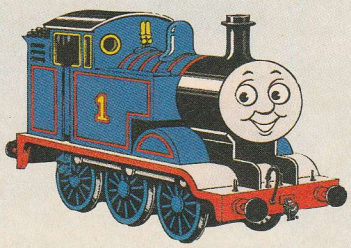
to have afternoon with me.

Please bring , I'm sure

they'd love to have a ride on

 . I will meet you at 

at Wellsworth station. I can say

hello to  too.

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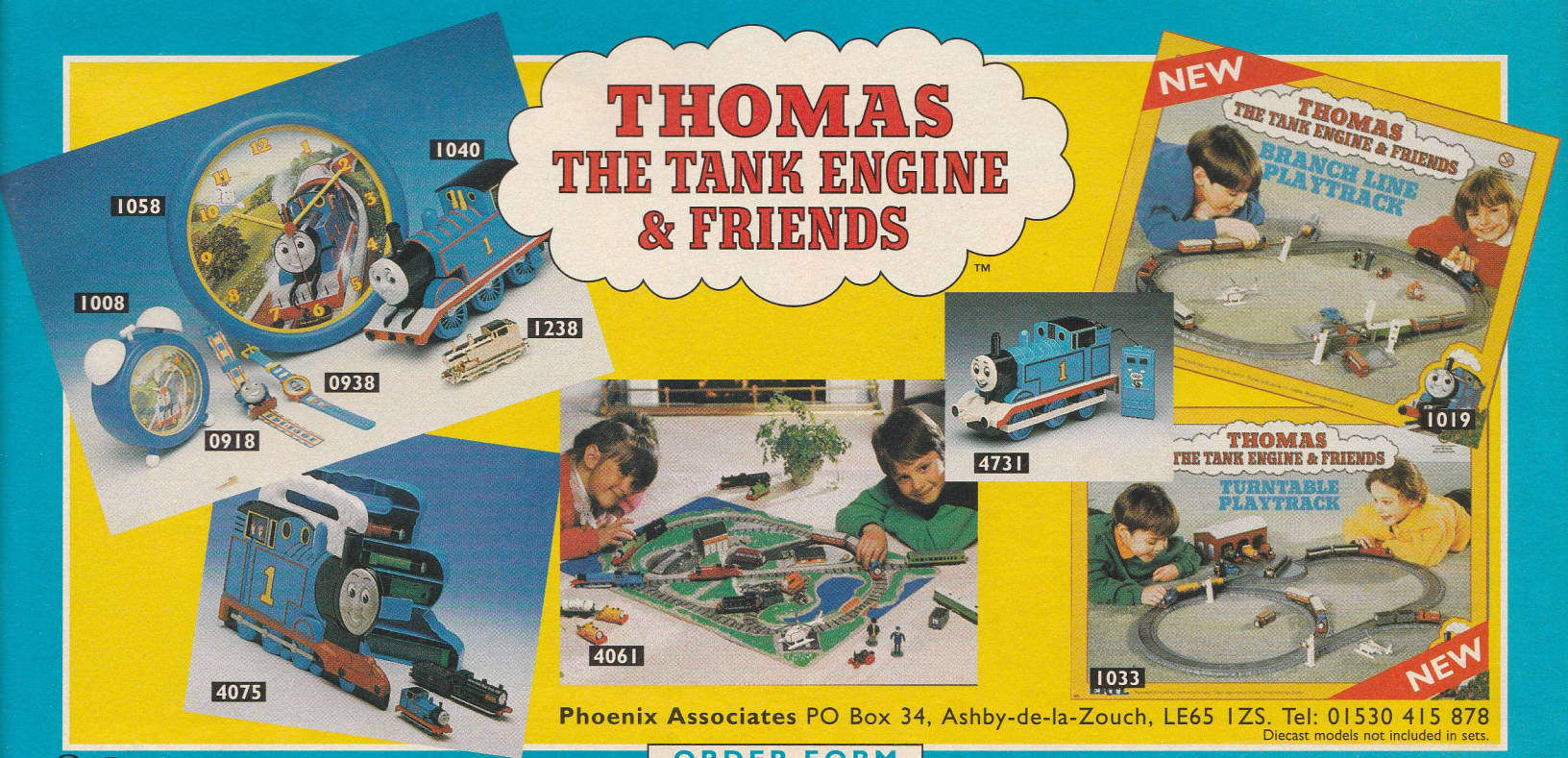

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		Total Order Value		

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1033	Turntable Playtrack NEW	£29.99		
		Postage & Packing		£2.99
		Total Order Value		

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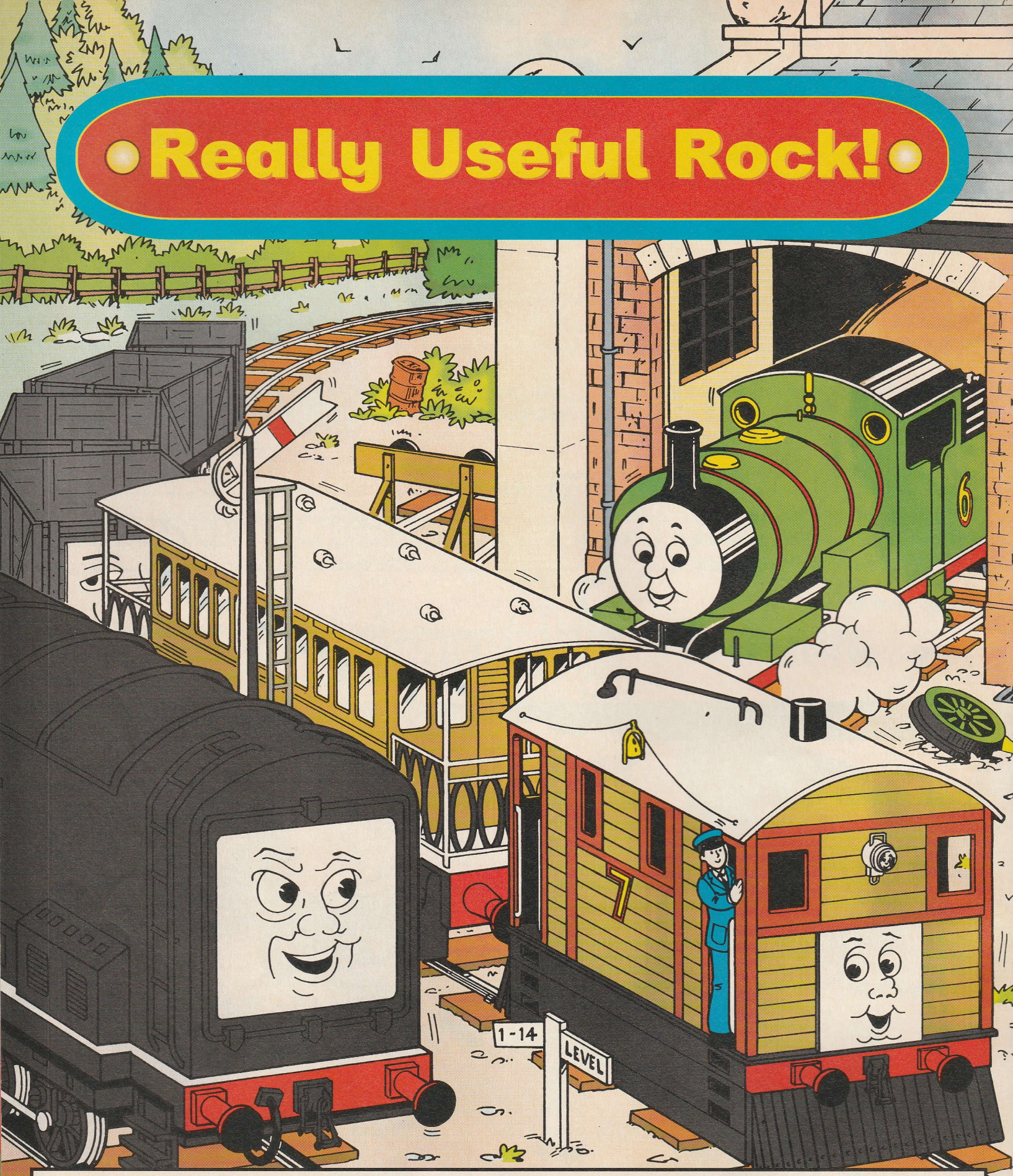
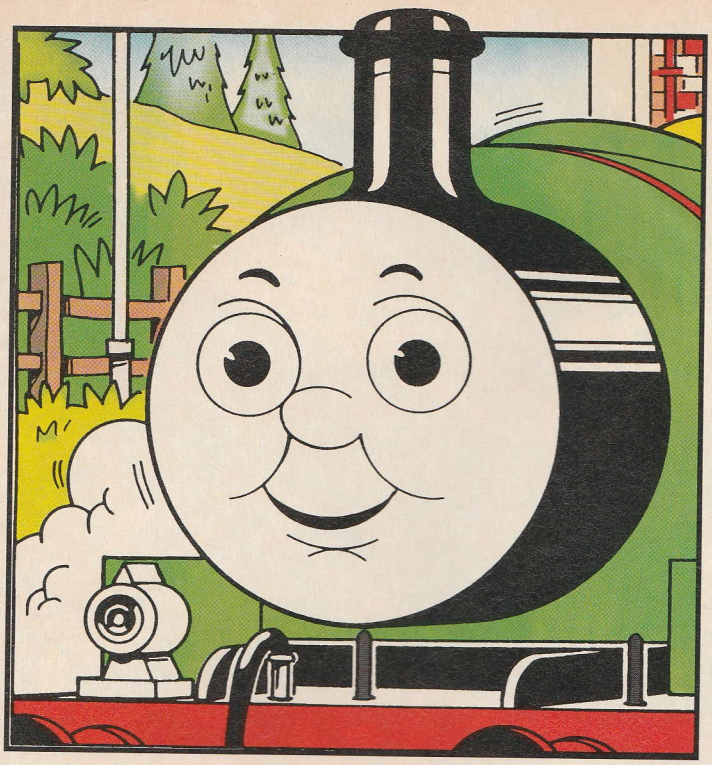
Really Useful Rock!

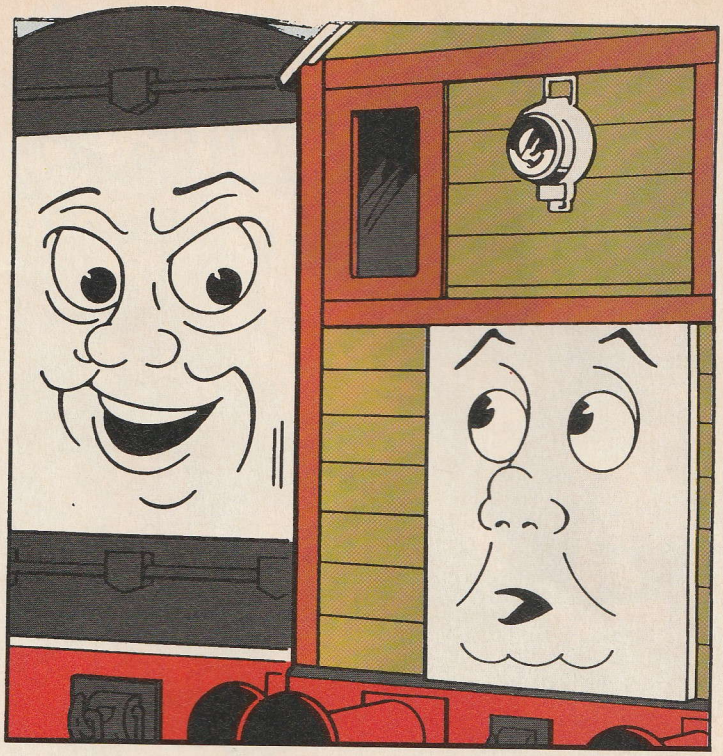


1. Toby spent most of his time working with his faithful coach, Henrietta, on the quarry line. "Carrying rock around all day gets very dull indeed," grumbled Toby.

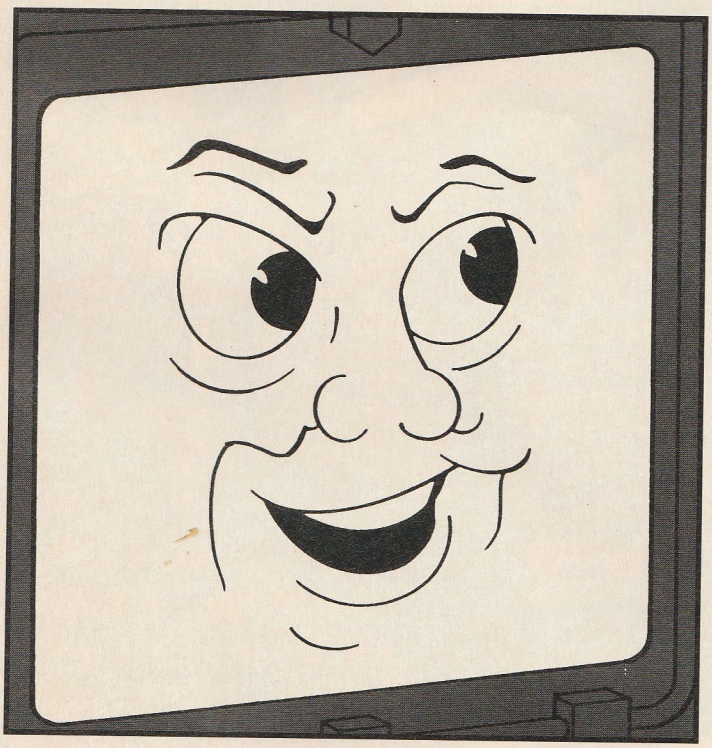
2. He was pleased to deliver some empty trucks to the Main Station. "It will be a change to see some of the other engines," thought Toby. Sure enough, he met Percy and Diesel.



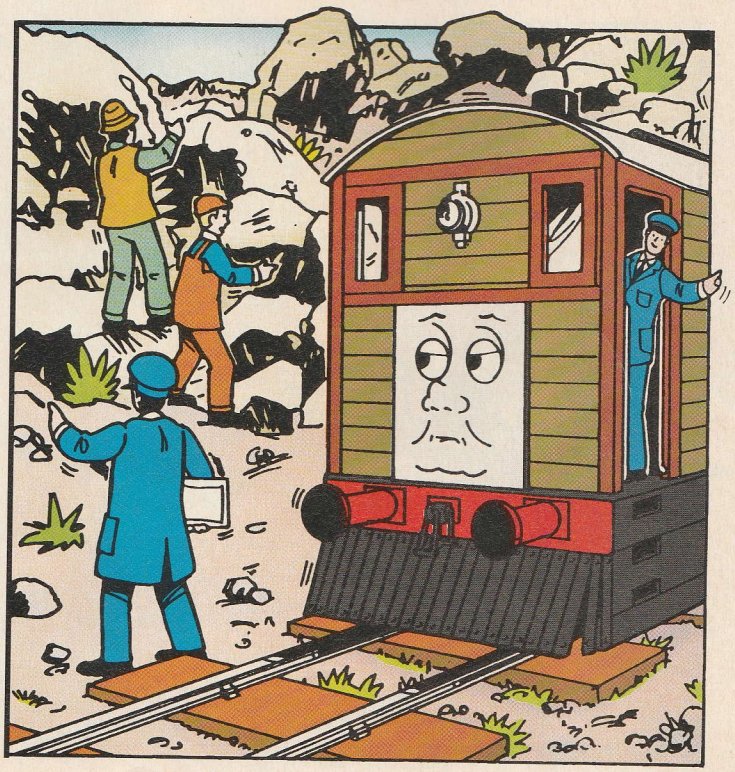
3. "Hello, Toby," called Percy, excitedly. "Guess what? The Fat Controller asked me to take him on a special works train today. We're going to inspect all the track."



4. Percy felt Really Useful, but poor Toby felt gloomier than ever. "I wish I could pull something more important than rock," he said. "Pah! "No chance of that!" sneered Diesel.



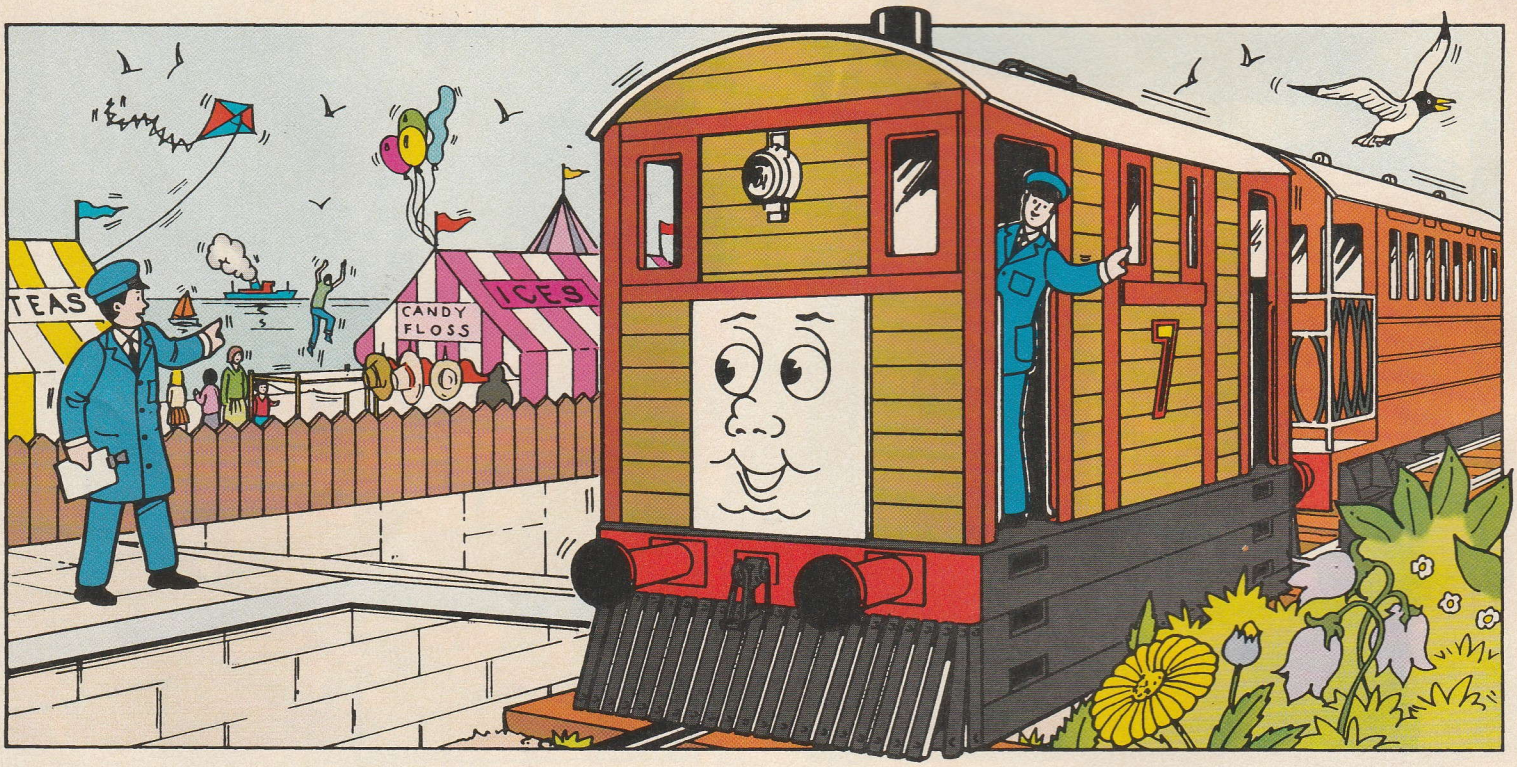
5. "An old-fashioned, steam-driven tram engine, like you, is only fit to carry boring lumps of rock," he went on nastily, in his oily voice. "I suppose you're right," sighed Toby.



6. Sadly, he returned to the quarry line. That afternoon, some men spent a long time wandering around the quarry, looking at all the rock. Then they stopped in front of Toby.

7. “He’s just the right engine for the job,” said one. The other men agreed and walked on. “It must be a very special task,” thought Toby, eagerly. “I’ve been chosen at last.”

8. How disappointed Toby was when the men returned. A crane loaded up his trucks with lots of pieces of rock which the men had chosen. “Not more rock!” he cried.

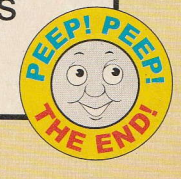


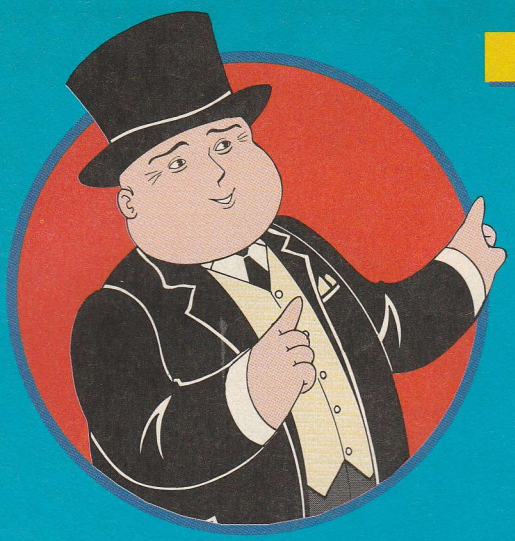
9. “I never get interesting work to do,” he groaned. But Toby soon cheered up when he found he had to deliver the rock to the seaside. It was always lots of fun there.

10. Toby pulled up at the seafront station. He waited in a siding while the rock was unloaded. Toby was puzzled. “I wonder what use can rock be here?” he thought.

11. A few weeks later, Toby visited the seaside again. The Fat Controller came too. The men Toby had seen at the quarry were there to meet him. Percy could hardly believe his eyes. Near the beach was a brand-new attraction for everyone to enjoy. A big sign read: 'THE ISLAND OF SODOR'S SEASIDE FANTASY GROTTO - OPENING TODAY!'

12. The men had used the rock to build a wonderful cave. There were fountains and pools lit up by spotlights. Inside, there were toadstool-shaped tables and seats of rock. Everyone clapped as the Fat Controller opened the grotto. "This was only possible thanks to Toby's hard work," he announced. Toby smiled, proudly. "Rock is Really Useful, after all!"





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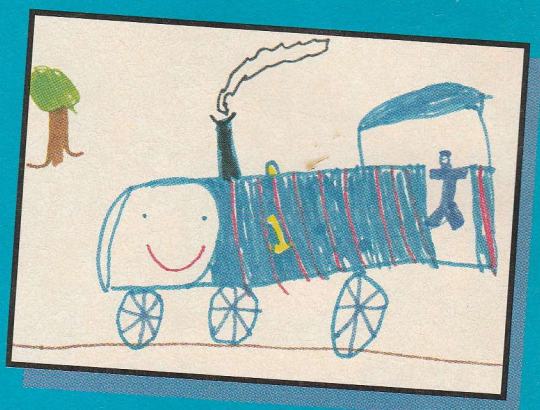
Please send your letters, pictures and drawings to Mail Train, Thomas, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5UJ.



Thomas looking very happy by Elizabeth Ing-Simmons, aged 5.

Star Letter

Dear Fat Controller,
Are Percy and Thomas afraid of the dark?

From Alex Creighton, aged 6.

Actually, Thomas likes the dark as he is able to use his lights. Little Percy sometimes gets a bit jumpy so I don't ask him to work at night!

The sender of any letter that is printed as our STAR LETTER will win a Thomas remote control model!

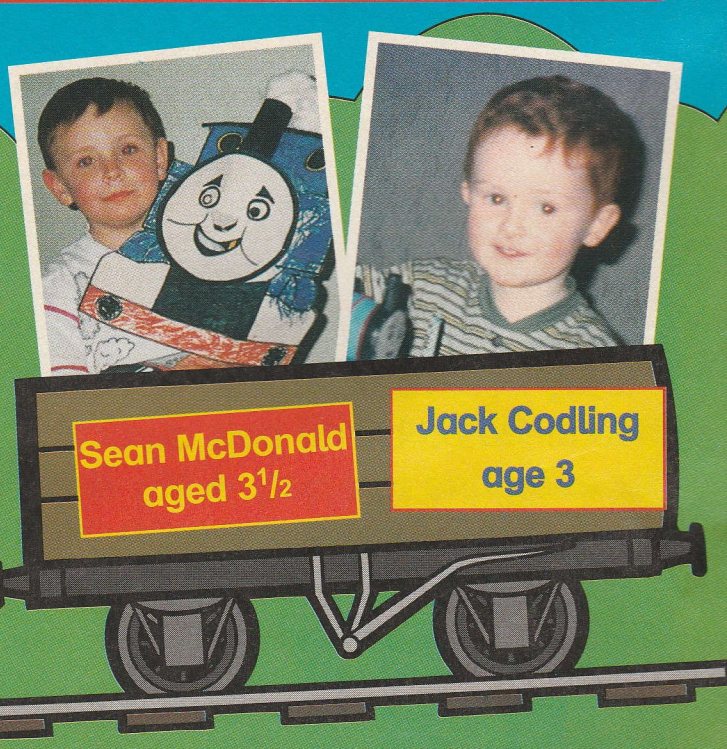
Prize Poem!

Victoria Hore, age 7, sent me this wonderful poem.

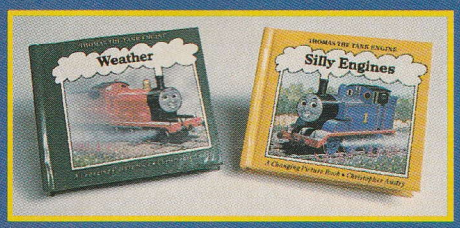
Thomas the Tank Engine,
Took a trip to the sea.
He looked at the sea,
It was as deep as can be.
He made a sand castle taller than me,
Then he went home to his shed for tea!

Happy Birthday

TO... Holly & Charli Leckenby, aged 3
Jonathan Hobbs, aged 2
Jonathan Munro-Cooke, aged 6 Nicholas Merritt aged 8

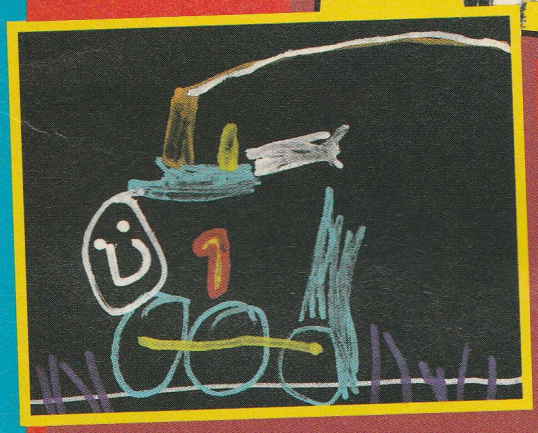


ail train!



Anyone who has a drawing printed on this page will win a special **Thomas Changing Picture Book.**

A colourful picture of Ben from James McCartney, aged 5.



A lovely drawing of Thomas by Christian Lyons, aged 4.

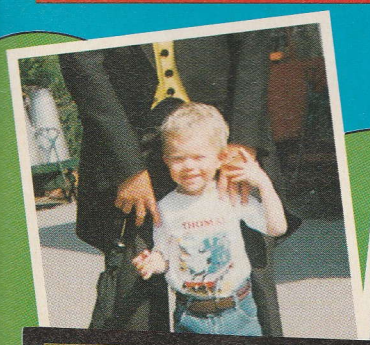
Percy's Jokes

Have you got a favourite joke or funny story? Why not send it to Percy!

What goes oom oom?
A cow walking backwards!
Eva Muir, aged 1.

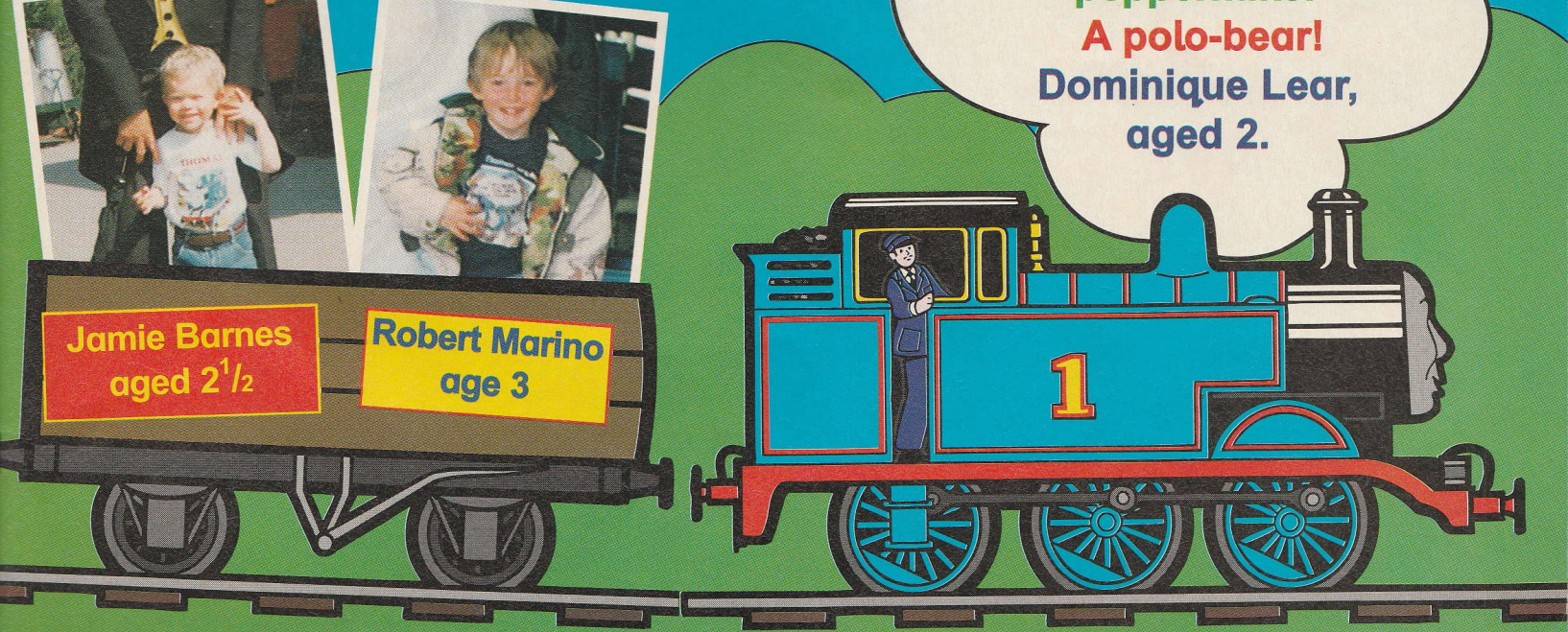
What do you call a train full of clever people?
A tube of smarties!
Paul Mason, aged 6.

What's white, furry and smells of peppermint?
A polo-bear!
Dominique Lear, aged 2.



Jamie Barnes aged 2 1/2

Robert Marino age 3



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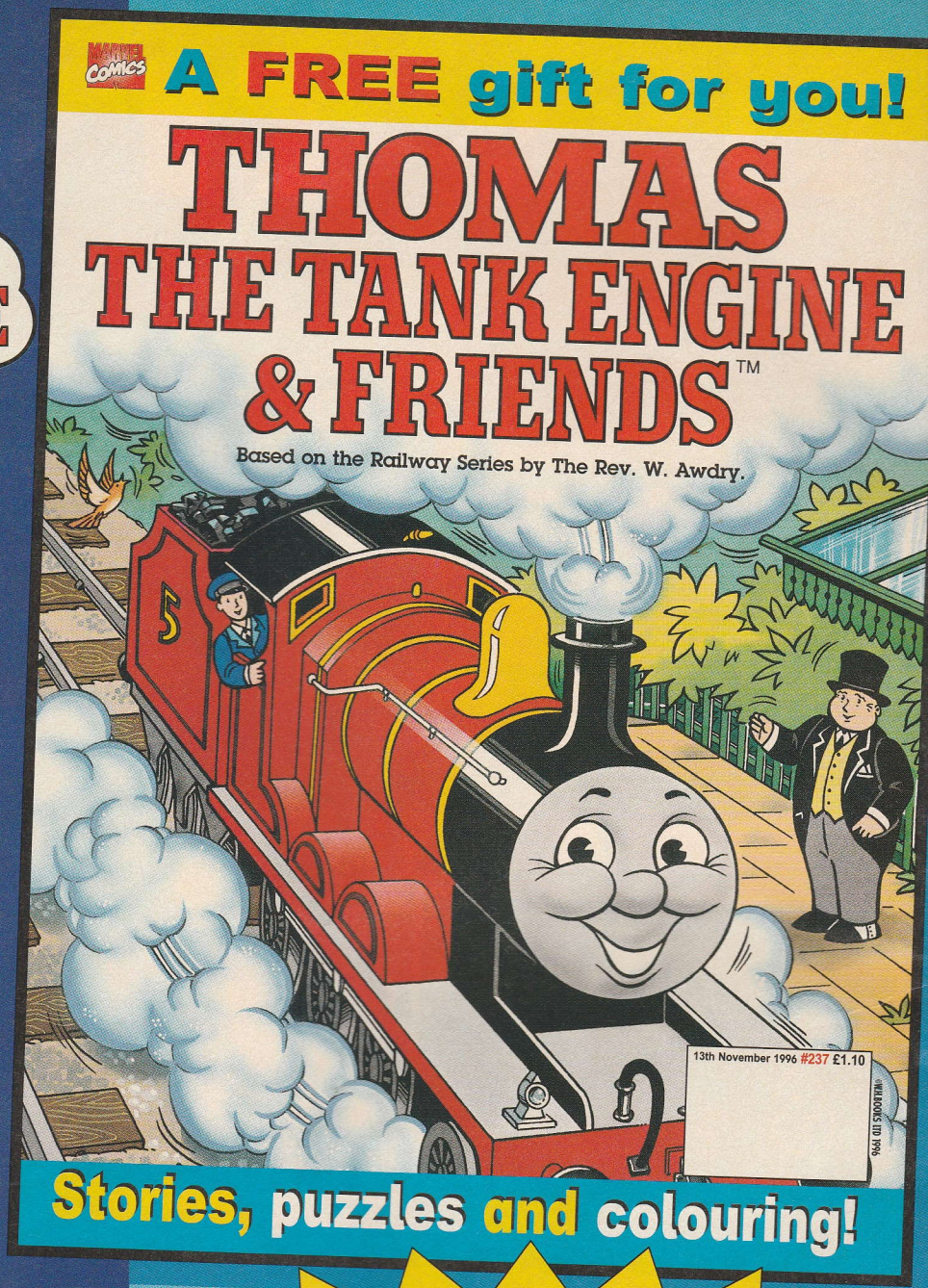

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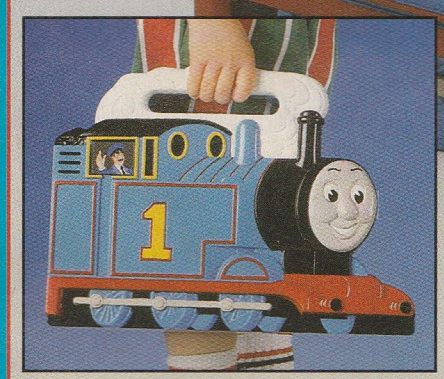

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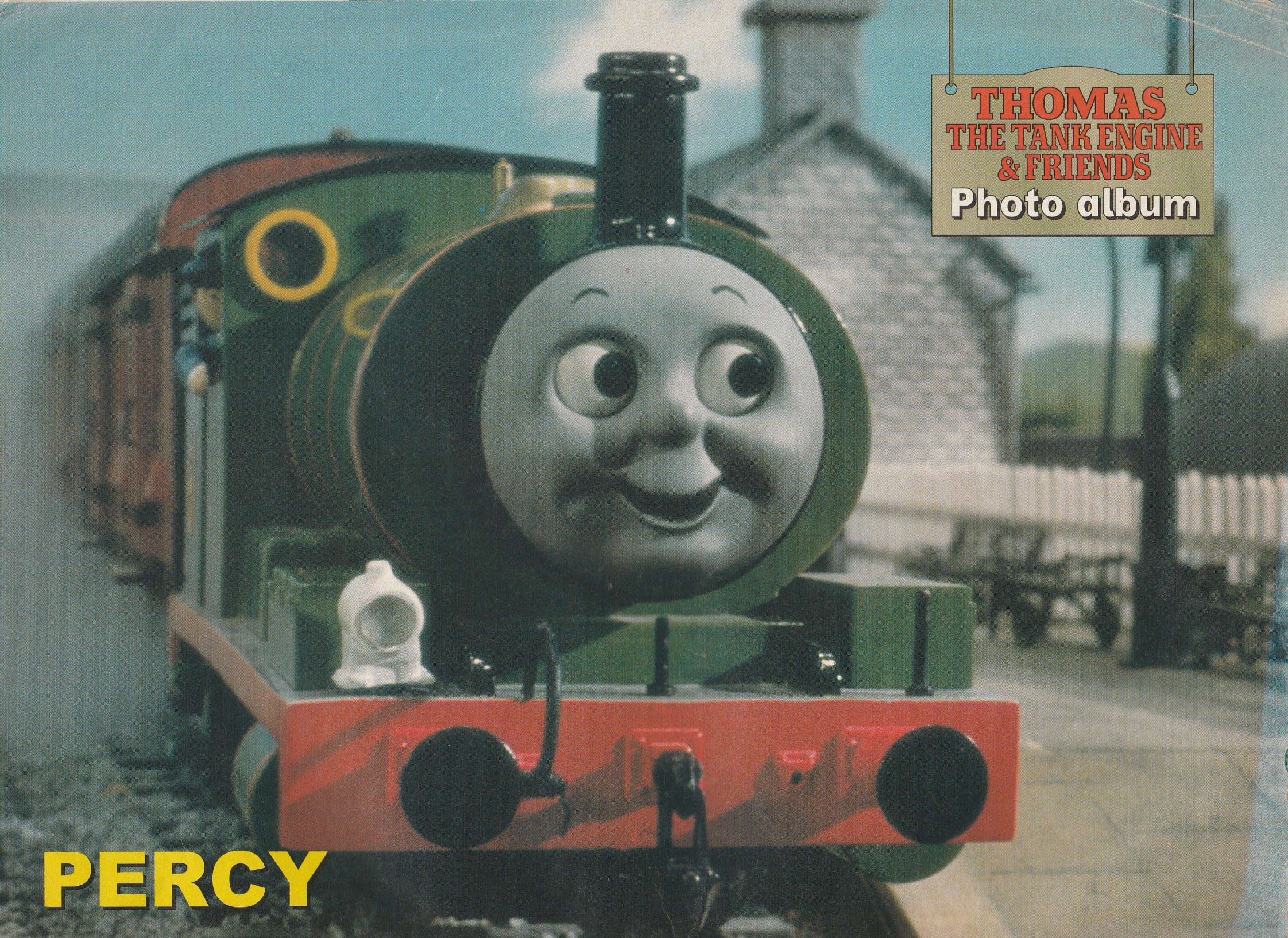
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